Jan Jakimiec

MONOGRAPH

POLAND'S SECURITY STRATEGY IN THE CONTEXT OF CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND THREATS

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The book, "Poland's Security Strategy in the context of contemporary challenges and threats" is primarily intended for those interested in Poland's security, security policy, and contemporary international threats. It may be particularly useful for: students and doctoral candidates in fields such as national security, international relations, political science, European studies, or defense studies; academics and educators who focus on national security, geopolitics, defense, or foreign policy; security analysts and experts, including those working in think tanks and institutions engaged in strategic analysis; public administration and state institution employees, particularly those involved in security, defense, and foreign policy; officers and defense sector employees who are interested in the strategic determinants of Poland's security; readers interested in Poland's contemporary geopolitical situation, especially Poland's relations with NATO and the EU, and threats to national security. Due to the academic nature of the title, it can be treated primarily as a specialist publication, rather than a book intended for readers looking for a popular science introduction to the subject of security.

This range of addressees results from the nature of the literature on the Polish security strategy: it covers both the analysis of the state's strategic documents and the contemporary security environment, including military, hybrid and technological threats.

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PREFACE

State security is a fundamental value that determines the durability of its institutions, development opportunities, and the ability to protect national interests. However, the contemporary security environment is characterized by increasing complexity, dynamics, and the interdependence of processes occurring at the national, regional, and global levels. Traditional military threats now coexist with political, economic, technological, social, information, and environmental challenges. Consequently, an effective security policy requires not only adequate defense capabilities but also a broad perspective on the resilience of the state and its society. Poland's geopolitical location gives security a special place in the strategic debate. Membership in NATO and the European Union, the importance of transatlantic relations, the security of the Alliance's eastern flank, and the transformations taking place in the European and global security systems create a complex context for formulating and implementing Poland's security strategy. At the same time, the experience of recent years demonstrates the need to consider phenomena such as armed conflicts, migration pressures, hybrid threats, cyberattacks, disinformation, supply chain disruptions, and the growing importance of new technologies. This publication attempts to analyze Poland's security strategy in the face of these transformations. Its goal is not to present Poland's security as an issue limited solely to the military sphere. On the contrary, individual chapters demonstrate the multidimensional nature of contemporary challenges and the need to combine political, diplomatic, economic, military, technological, and social instruments.

The relationship between the national and allied dimensions of security is of particular importance. Poland, like other European states, pursues its security interests both through its own capabilities and institutions and through participation in international cooperation mechanisms. Analyzing this interdependence allows for a better understanding of both the opportunities and limitations of contemporary security policy. The authors of this volume also reflect on the nature of threats whose effects may transcend traditionally understood state borders and security sectors. Critical infrastructure resilience, energy security, cybersecurity, information security, and the ability of public institutions and society to respond to crises are of particular importance. These issues require an interdisciplinary approach, combining the perspective of security studies with the achievements of political science, economics, international relations, law, and management sciences. This publication therefore attempts to answer the question of how Poland can define and pursue its security interests

in an environment undergoing rapid and multifaceted change. Individual contributions do not necessarily lead to identical conclusions, and their diversity constitutes the volume's significant scholarly value. It allows for a diverse perspective on contemporary security issues and encourages further debate on the directions of development of Poland's security strategy.

By presenting this book to readers, we hope that it will contribute to a deeper reflection on Poland's place in the evolving security environment and on the state's ability to recognize, prevent, and respond to contemporary challenges. Given the dynamics of international processes, reflection on security cannot be treated as a closed task. It requires constant observation of changes, critical analysis of existing solutions, and the search for new instruments to strengthen the resilience of the state and its society.

INTRODUCTION

Security is one of the most fundamental needs of the individual, social groups, and the entire nation and state.[1] In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, "*The Republic of Poland safeguards the independence and integrity of its territory, ensures the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens and the safety of citizens, safeguards the national heritage, and ensures the prote ction of the environment, pursuant to the principle of sustainable development*."[2] State bodies and institutions—whether governmental, non-governmental, or local government—as well as associations, carry out tasks for the sake of the security of the state and its citizens.

In the context of contemporary challenges and threats, the strategy for building an effective national security system for the Republic of Poland must be grounded in NATO membership and strategic alliances with the United States and the European Union. Amidst the evolving security architecture of Central and Eastern Europe, Poland must be prepared to spearhead regional cooperation frameworks—not only with Central and Eastern European nations (such as through the Three Seas Initiative or the Visegrád Group) but also by forging diplomatic, military, and economic ties with other states. Poland must be ready to share responsibility for shaping the new global order and to assume a leadership role in post-imperial Europe. A crucial aspect of security is the nation's own military capability, alongside dynamic efforts to modernize and dramatically strengthen the military potential of the Polish Armed Forces. The major military conflict in Europe instigated by Russia also marks a new stage in international rivalry, given that—as Zbigniew Brzeziński argued—Ukraine is the linchpin of international security. Consequently, at both global and regional levels, the primary threat stems from the intensity of political conflict driven by political, ideological, and economic rivalries, as well as the drive by emerging powers (China, India, Russia) to undermine US dominance. Widening divergences between Chinese and Western mindsets[3] have prompted NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to highlight the security risks posed by the actions of authoritarian powers such as China. In this context, reference is made not only to Russia's aggression against Ukraine but also to Xi Jinping's statement at the recent CCP congress that China will never renounce the option of using force to incorporate Taiwan.

[1] A. Maslow, Motywacja i osobowość, Warszawa 2010, s. 65-68.
[2] Konstytucja RP z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 roku, art. 5, Dz.U. z 1997 roku, nr 78, poz.483.
[3] P. Krzykowski, Współczesny wymiar bezpieczeństwa. Wyzwania dla Polski, Warszawa 2020, s. 46.

Among contemporary scholars, the prevailing view is that current security conditions justify moving away from a narrow perception of security—defined merely as the absence of threats to the existence and survival of individuals. Instead, security should be viewed broadly, as a process influenced by factors shaping various aspects of the lives of individuals, as well as the functioning of state institutions and authorities. Security is a highly dynamic and volatile phenomenon. Only when framed and analyzed in this way does it lead to appropriate actions and measures by the entities responsible for maintaining it. Maintaining an adequate level of state security also relies on the continuous monitoring and analysis of the range of threats characterizing the contemporary international environment. Achieving this state requires the constant reassessment of the nature of international relations. Based on such state-level activities, responsible entities formulate policy guidelines. Those responsible for security should also define security objectives and scopes across various categories essentially establishing a set of guidelines that incorporate the key elements defining external, internal, national, and international security. Defining the scope of national security, for instance, is essential for establishing and upholding the *raison d'état*, thereby safeguarding the state's position on the international stage. Defining objectives also appears to be a crucial aspect of analyzing specific types of security. Consequently, when analyzing a particular type of security, a researcher should identify a concrete list of needs or objectives relevant to that specific area.

Ensuring and maintaining an adequate level of state security—and, consequently, the effective functioning of relevant entities—depends on the efficient operation of the state security system and its constituent elements within designated security subsystems. It is precisely the institutions operating within these subsystems to achieve specific security objectives that should have their competencies defined and assigned in the National Security Strategy. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has undoubtedly led to a sharp deterioration in the security situation of Poland as a frontline state. At the same time, Russia's overt aggression in the immediate vicinity of NATO and European Union nations has spurred greater unity, solidarity, and readiness among the members of the Euro-Atlantic community, led by the United States as the primary security guarantor. This has reversed the trend of reducing the American presence in Europe and marked a genuine return of the U.S. to the role of driving the strengthening of NATO's European pillar—a necessary step for the Alliance to effectively fulfill its original and currently vital function as a defensive alliance. These changes have also resulted in the reinforcement of the Alliance's so-called eastern flank in Central and Eastern

Europe—a move Poland had vigorously advocated for as early as the initial stages of the Russian aggression against Crimea and the Donbas in 2014.

Authoritarian states are testing the security systems of democratic nations, as evidenced by violations of US airspace by Chinese weather balloons or other objects. Other incidents include airspace violations by Chinese aircraft near Taiwan and the breach of Polish and Swedish airspace by Russian aircraft in October 2022. Attempts to alter the international order—which remains relatively dominated by the United States—are evident; various regional powers such as China and Russia, as well as Turkey, India, and Iran, are challenging certain elements, standards, or institutions of that order. Against this backdrop, 2022 was marked by the return of interstate warfare and territorial revisionism in Europe. This represented a significant turning point for the European security architecture, while in the Asia-Pacific region, rising tensions surrounding Taiwan and fears of a potential Chinese invasion became apparent. As emphasized at the Warsaw Conference—the first Standing Working Review Conference on Support for Ukraine—victory in the war against Russia requires the construction of a new security architecture encompassing not only the political but also the economic dimension. Poland faces numerous challenges, including the need to build an energy system independent of Russia. Today, Ukraine stands as a bastion of European freedom, and investing in its strengthening is a moral imperative as well as a necessity in terms of hard *Realpolitik*.

State security encompasses various mechanisms designed to ensure and maintain stability, order, and social harmony at an acceptable level, as well as modes of action, motivations, and forms of human behavior. Security relates to the fulfillment of needs—both societal and individual—such as existence, the assurance of development, identity, independence, tranquility, and survival. It constitutes a paramount need for the state, whereas a lack of security results in anxiety and a sense of threat.[4] National governments are responsible for achieving and maintaining the desired level of security for the state and its citizens. Poland implements a National Security Strategy and, like other nations, strives to maintain the desired state of security for its territory and people. Societal changes have led to an evolution in how the role and functions of the state are defined, with ensuring an adequate level of security ranking among its most critical tasks. Successfully building a state security architecture requires an appropriate strategy—one that enables the effective realization of the primary goal: national security. In every country worldwide, security is a key value that impacts not only the smooth

[4] A. Pieczywok, Auksologia bezpieczeństwa człowieka. W poszukiwaniu kontekstu znaczeniowo-edukacyjnego, Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Obrony Narodowej w Warszawie î 2010, Nr 3, s. 225.

functioning of the state and its institutions and bodies but also society as a whole.[5] Ensuring a sense of security constitutes one of the most important existential and developmental needs of human beings, while achieving an appropriate level of security enables the fulfilment of other essential needs of every individual. One of the many existing definitions describes security as "*a state of certainty, peace, and protection,*[6] *as well as the sense thereof, signifying the absence of threats and protection against dangers.*"[7]

[5] M. Karpiuk, K. Orzeszyna, Wstęp, (w:) M. Karpiuk, K. Orzeszyna (red.), Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Wybrane zagadnienia prawne, Warszawa 2014. s. 5.
[6] R. Zięba, *Kategorie bezpieczeństwa w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych,* [w:] Bezpieczeństwo narodowe i międzynarodowe u schyłku XX wieku, red. D.B. Bobrow, E. Haliżak, R. Zięba, Warszawa 1997, s.3.
[7] S. Zalewski, *Bezpieczeństwo jako aspekt edukacji obronnej*, [w:] Przygotowanie obronne społeczeństwa, red. J. Kunikowski, Warszawa 2001, s. 152.

Chapter I

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. ASSUMPTIONS AND GOALS OF THE WORK

1.1. Justification for the choice of research topic

This study analyzes Poland's security strategy in the context of contemporary challenges and threats. Furthermore, it examines the evolution of the country's geopolitical position and the role Poland currently plays in shaping the security architecture of Central and Eastern Europe and within transatlantic structures. Amidst rapid changes to the security architecture and the global redefinition of the international order, Poland is consistently developing its defense capabilities and actively participating in the security policies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Key factors influencing contemporary strategic challenges include tensions in transatlantic relations, the Russia-Ukraine war, intensifying rivalry among global powers, and the EU's pursuit of strategic autonomy. In response to these challenges and growing threats, Poland is investing in the expansion of its armed forces, planning to establish the largest land army in Europe, while also implementing a national defence modernisation programme, including the Eastern Shield project. Increased defense spending and intensified cooperation with European partners are integral to the strategy of strengthening Poland's position as a key player in regional and transatlantic security.[8] The political context—including Poland's presidency of the Council of the EU and the 2025 presidential elections—also influences the determination of security policy directions and priorities. Poland faces the challenge of finding its place in the new multipolar order, which requires the ability to combine alliance-based cooperation with the development of its own defensive strength and counter-strike capabilities. Poland must navigate this new multipolar world by effectively balancing cooperation within alliances with the development of its own defense potential. Ensuring an adequate level of security is a fundamental function of any state and of the institutions responsible for security. Activities related to the broad spectrum of security are considered paramount, given the changes occurring in both the domestic and international environments that are redefining the concepts of security and security threats.

[8] https://www.fondapol.org/app/uploads/2025/09/263_torbicka_pol_2025-07-10_v4.pdf

The Republic of Poland and the institutions responsible for maintaining an adequate level of security must take into account the multidimensional nature of security threats, as well as the impact of factors that directly affect the security of the state and its citizens. Beyond the development of military capabilities, the national security strategy should also address other aspects that influence our behaviors and attitudes regarding the perception of threats. Alongside clearly defined security objectives, it is crucial to foster and shape public awareness regarding defense. From an early age, the younger generation should be educated to anticipate threats and motivated to actively participate in various initiatives aimed at enhancing security.[9] Andrzej Pieczywok points out that security should be interpreted in terms of philosophical, psychological-pedagogical, and sociological values and concepts that recognize human nature and address the question of what a human being is—specifically highlighting security as a natural need in human life.[10] The post-Cold War global security architecture is undergoing dynamic change. Over the past three decades, events have periodically occurred that significantly transformed the conditions in which states and alliances operate. Actors set strategic goals based on the identification of their interests. Achieving these goals requires an appropriate strategy; the provisions of such a strategy can be effectively operationalized only if the security environment in which the actor operates is accurately assessed.

Poland's experience in defining national interests and the methods for pursuing them through strategic documents spans only the last thirty years. Previously, the strategies of the Polish People's Republic—a state dependent on the Soviet Union and a member of the Warsaw Pact—were effectively drafted in Moscow. This situation changed in 1989 and has since evolved several times, driven in part by Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Today, Poland independently identifies its national interests and the means to achieve them, outlining these in its National Security Strategies. These strategic documents also describe the security environment in which Poland operates—an environment that shapes the possibilities and necessities regarding key decision-making. Ideally, assessments of this environment at both the national and NATO levels should be similar—or at the very least consistent—reflecting the alliance's commitment to cooperation on security policy. This necessitates effective collaboration within NATO during the process of formulating a shared strategic concept. It should be noted, however, that the Republic

[9] A. Pieczywok, Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa wobec zagrożeń i wyzwań współczesności, Warszawa 2012, s. 34.
[10] A. Pieczywok, Auksologia bezpieczeństwa człowieka. W poszukiwaniu kontekstu znaczeniowo-edukacyjnego, Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Obrony Narodowej w Warszawie î 2010, Nr 3, s. 225.

of Poland's National Security Strategies take precedence over alliance documents. At the same time, Poland should aim to ensure that its strategic views are maximally reflected in NATO concepts. Given this specific context—which may point to certain interdependencies in how the security environment is defined—it is appropriate to examine the degree of alignment between national and alliance documents over the course of Poland's 27 years of NATO membership.

One of the objectives of this study is to identify issues associated with the implementation of strategic planning in the sphere of national security—spanning the academic, legislative, executive, and political levels. These matters concern the competencies of state bodies and individual rights under the Constitution of the Republic of Poland; therefore, they should be regulated by statute. It should be noted that while various initiatives have been undertaken to legally regulate security management at the strategic level—particularly strategic planning—none have progressed beyond the conceptual stage. Over the years, isolated legal regulations addressing specific aspects of this field have emerged—such as establishing the legal basis for preparing and issuing the National Security Strategy (and related sectoral strategies), the Strategic Defence Directive of the Republic of Poland (PSDO), the Defence Response Plan of the Republic of Poland (PRORP), and the national plan for the employment of the armed forces (PUSZ). However, a unified concept for the legal regulation of strategic planning in the national security sphere at the state level—let alone the management thereof—has never been successfully presented.

In this context, a distinction must be made between identified formal-legal shortcomings—such as the lack of formal complementarity between various strategies and specific documents—and organizational-competence deficiencies, such as the lack of coordination among different bodies regarding decision-making, particularly concerning the existing capabilities of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland to carry out their constitutional tasks. While analyzing the national security management system in place between 2010 and 2015, Stanisław Koziej highlighted its significant weaknesses. In his view, remedying these issues requires numerous changes and adjustments to the system, culminating in the need for a comprehensive, long-term transformation program. A rational strategy should serve as both the starting point and the conceptual foundation for such a program. This poses very specific challenges for state authorities—particularly for the President and the Council of Ministers, who are constitutionally mandated to cooperate closely. Efforts to date to meet these challenges have been unsatisfactory. Due to the lack of such cooperation, state authorities

have failed to take any significant step toward eliminating key weaknesses that have accumulated over many years. Above all, there is a lack of a clearly defined strategic vision and a coherent guiding principle for rectifying the situation. The strategic documents that are adopted either fail to align with one another or are merely fragmentary and piecemeal in nature.[11] Based on the research conducted—including an analysis of the literature, the legal framework, the formal organization of structures responsible for national security tasks, and the relationships within the spheres of competence and function—the question arises as to whether a national security system exists in Poland that meets the defining characteristics of a "system."[12]

It should be noted that the Constitution of the Republic of Poland implies that the competence of an administrative authority cannot be presumed, and a legal obligation arises for a citizen or a business entity only where there is an explicit legal basis.[13] Certain issues regarding the application of law concerning strategic planning for state defense stem from ambiguous provisions in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997; this creates uncertainty regarding the application of specific regulations found in statutes governing defense matters and in implementing regulations. While the Constitution addresses fundamental aspects of national security, certain provisions raise doubts in terms of practical application. A case in point is the application of Article 136 of the Constitution. This article defines the powers of both the President of the Republic (who orders general or partial mobilization and the deployment of the Armed Forces) and the Prime Minister (who submits the motion for such an order); it also specifies the condition that must be met for the motion to be submitted (a direct external threat to the state) and the procedure involved (submission of the motion, followed by the decision to order mobilization and/or the deployment of the Armed Forces). However, the wording of Article 136 does not dictate that the President's order for general mobilization is unconditionally linked to the immediate deployment of the Armed Forces; while the order provides the legal authority to deploy the Armed Forces, the actual conduct of defense operations falls within the purview of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, should one be appointed. Regarding mobilization, the content of Article 136 raises the question

[11] S. Koziej, *Studia o bezpieczeństwie. O bezpieczeństwie narodowym i międzynarodowym w latach 2010–2015 w publikacjach i analizach szefa Biura Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Uczelni Łazarskiego, Warszawa 2017, s. 199.

[12] M. Kuliczkowski, *Przygotowania obronne państwa w systemie bezpieczeństwa narodowego – miejsce i rola,* w: M. Kuliczkowski (red.), Administracja publiczna w procesie przygotowań obronnych państwa, Warszawa 2018, s. 62.

[13] L. Bełza, D. Ćwik, *Dylematy prawne dotyczące realizacji niektórych zadań w ramach przygotowań obronnych państwa*, „Wiedza Obronna" 2019, t. 269, nr 4, s. 105.

of whether the order (as an executive act) applies solely to the Armed Forces or also to other entities—natural and legal persons—in the event that economic mobilization needs to be activated. Attention should be drawn to a potential inconsistency (discrepancy) between the provisions of Article 136 and the content of Article 229 of the Constitution. The former mandates that the President order general or partial mobilization and the deployment of the Armed Forces in the event of a direct external threat to the state (the President *orders* this), whereas Article 229—which is both substantive and procedural in nature—provides for the *discretionary* possibility of declaring a state of war across part or all of the state's territory in the event of an external threat to the state, an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or an obligation arising from an international agreement regarding joint defense against aggression (the President *may* declare a state of war across part or all of the state's territory). While the discretionary option to declare a state of war—arising from a joint defense obligation or an external threat to the state—is understandable, the provision appears inconsistent regarding an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland; this is particularly true given that Article 136 of the Constitution mandates the ordering of mobilization as soon as there is a direct external threat to state security, without waiting for an actual armed attack to occur. Constitutional law experts have weighed in on certain ambiguous issues regarding the application of Article 136 of the Constitution. For instance, a commentary on the Constitution of the Republic of Poland edited by Piotr Tuleja[14] notes that the "use of the Armed Forces" can be understood in two ways. First, it refers to authorizing the Armed Forces to engage in hostilities involving the use of various types of weaponry. Second, in a broader sense, it encompasses actions that do not constitute armed combat but represent direct preparation for, and the attainment of readiness to undertake, such actions (i.e., readiness to use weapons). The phrasing employed—deliberately left open-ended—might suggest that a prerequisite is the prior or simultaneous declaration of a state of war, given that Article 229 cites an external threat to the state as grounds for declaring such an extraordinary measure. However, since Article 229 merely provides for the *possibility* of declaring a state of war, whereas the wording of Article 136 implies an *obligation* to act in the situation described therein, one must allow—albeit as an exception—for the application of Article 136 (primarily in the form of partial mobilization) without declaring a state of war. The concept of a "direct, external threat to state security" used in Article 136 should be interpreted broadly to include

[14] Komentarz do art. 136 Konstytucji RP, w: P. Tuleja (red.), *Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Komentarz, wyd. II*, LexisNexis 2014, http://10.254.10.16/#/commentary/587939393/736833/tuleja-piotr-red-konstytucja-rzeczypospolitej-polskiej-komenta-rz-wyd-ii?cm=URELATIONS (dostęp: 9 maja 2025 r.).

situations where an international agreement entails an obligation of collective defense against aggression (Article 229).

It should be noted that Article 136 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland grants the President of the Republic two powers that may be exercised either jointly or separately.[15] The legislature did not link the ordering of mobilization to the declaration of a state of war, even though the grounds for both measures share significant similarities.[16] It is difficult to disagree that the initiation of mobilization may precede a state of war and demonstrate the state's resolve, thereby "cooling dangerous intentions directed against it."[17]

1.2. Main research problem and research thesis; subject of research, objectives, and research questions

The nature of the primary research problem—specifically its complexity and multidimensionality—calls for an adequate response. The rapidly evolving geopolitical security landscape, combined with a sense of threat—particularly from the Russian Federation—has prompted the Polish government to place greater emphasis on issues concerning national security.

Main research problem:

How effective is the process of establishing an acceptable level of Poland's national security?

It must be emphasized that the effectiveness of establishing an acceptable level of Poland's national security relies on a dual approach: dynamic military modernization combined with the ongoing development of non-military structure coordination and societal resilience. Assessing this effectiveness requires distinguishing between traditional (hard) and modern (hybrid) dimensions of defense—a distinction reflected in the principles of the National Security Strategy recently developed by the government and the National Security Bureau (BBN). Poland is successfully establishing itself as a leader in NATO defense spending (through progressive increases in the defense budget) and is implementing an unprecedented technical modernization program for the Polish Armed Forces. Procurements of modern armored vehicles, aircraft, and missile defense systems are tangibly raising the

[15] Zob.: P. *Sarnecki, Prezydent Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Komentarz do przepisów, Kraków 2000*, s. 100; M. Gąska, *Kompetencje organów władzy wykonawczej w dziedzinie obronności państwa i sił zbrojnych*, Warszawa 2002, s. 24; B. Opaliński, *Rozdzielenie kompetencji władzy wykonawczej między prezydenta RP oraz Radę Ministrów na tle konstytucji Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 1997 roku*, Warszawa 2012, s. 182.

[16] Przeciwne stanowisko w tej kwestii zajmuje M. Gąska. Zob.: M. Gąska, *Kompetencje organów władzy*..., op. cit., s. 23.

[17] B. Banaszak, *Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Komentarz*, Warszawa 2009, s. 671.

threshold for deterring potential conventional aggression. Full operational integration within NATO structures and bilateral military cooperation with the USA remain key elements in maintaining an acceptable level of security. The presence of allied troops on Polish soil serves as a solid guarantee of stability. While the military component is advancing rapidly, experts consistently point to delays in building so-called "total defense" resilience.

Main research thesis:

The effectiveness of Poland's security strategy is determined by the level of the state's military potential and its ability to integrate military, political, social, economic, technological, and informational resources within a resilient, multi-domain security system capable of responding to compounded and hybrid threats.

Subject of research:

Assumptions and objectives of Poland's security strategy in the context of contemporary challenges and threats.

The author assumes that, given the problem situation and research subject as defined, the subject will be thoroughly examined and the study's main objective achieved. Poland's security strategy is a document grounded in ensuring the inviolability of borders and state sovereignty, as well as protecting the lives and health of citizens, through the development of comprehensive state resilience, close integration within NATO and European Union structures, and allied cooperation with the United States. This framework is established by the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, adopted by the Council of Ministers.

The main purpose of the work:

Assessment of the effectiveness of actions under Poland's security strategy and an analysis of contemporary international challenges and threats within the context of the Euro-Atlantic security system.

The contemporary Euro-Atlantic security system must confront the most complex and unpredictable threat environment since the Cold War, characterized by the return of great-power rivalry, the destabilization of NATO's eastern and southern flanks, terrorism, and the rapid emergence of asymmetric and technological threats.

The research objectives adopted in the study are closely aligned with the defined research problem, the subject of the study, the research premises, and the cognitive needs:

Specific objectives:

1. Supplementing and deepening existing analyses and research findings regarding Poland's security.

2. In-depth analysis and assessment of contemporary challenges and threats within the state's security environment.

3. Reviewing the current approach to state security issues, building a defense capability that is effective and resilient to external threats, and adopting an appropriate defense strategy.

Main research question:

To what extent does Poland's contemporary security strategy align with the nature and dynamics of threats in the current security environment, and what changes are necessary to enhance the state's strategic resilience?

Detailed research questions:

1. *How has Poland's security strategy evolved since 1989?*
2. *What factors most significantly shape Poland's contemporary security environment?*
3. *How has the nature of threats to state security changed?*
4. *Is Poland's security system prepared to respond to multi-domain threats?*
5. *To what extent do NATO and the EU strengthen Poland's strategic capabilities?*

1.3. Research methods, techniques, and tools

Achieving research objectives requires the use of appropriate research methods, techniques, and tools.[18] This study employs methods that enable a comprehensive and multidimensional analysis of phenomena within the realm of security. The research methods applied facilitated an in-depth exploration of the subject matter and the achievement of the defined research objective. The formulated research questions and hypothesis necessitate the use of appropriate research approaches and methods.

The study employs a neo-institutional approach, resulting in a broader range of methods; consequently, institutional-legal analysis serves as one of the methods used in the research. Given that social security is linked to politics as a social phenomenon—while also possessing an individual dimension—and that group behaviors can be derived from the way individuals act, it was necessary to employ a behavioral method based on the analysis of individual behavior. This method allows for the analysis of the actions of specific individuals holding

[18] M. Łobocki, *Metody i techniki badań pedagogicznych*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Impuls, Kraków 2011, s. 55.

political offices relevant to security. This aspect is crucial, as specific behaviors often conflict with the findings derived from the institutional-legal method, which forms the institutional basis for the operations of the entities in question.[19] The chosen analytical approach justifies the use of the historical method. This is based on the premise that past documents, findings, programs, and experiences regarding the security environment—and the strategies for maintaining it at a desired level—constitute a crucial element of the state's security architecture. The objectives set out in the study also necessitate the use of the legal-dogmatic method, which aids in the analysis of legal sources. Meanwhile, the comparative method will be employed to contrast the current legal framework with previous regulations. A systems approach will also be applied to interpret the existing state of cooperation, interdependence, and accountability among government bodies. Furthermore, elements of the decision-making method will be utilized to analyze legislative solutions.

One of the primary research methods employed in this study is an analysis of the relevant literature, theoretical foundations, and definitions of security, as well as the current state of knowledge regarding contemporary challenges and threats within the security environment. The document analysis will encompass reports, studies, and publications from national and international institutions, alongside online sources addressing the subject matter. Combining various research methods and techniques will enable the generation of results concerning the research problem that are reliable and scientifically objective.

The research material documented in this study encompasses specialized knowledge and diverse sources of information regarding contemporary security factors and conditions, as well as the interrelationships between states. Key sources include monographs, studies, and publications in the fields of military affairs and security studies. An important body of research material consists of reports and analyses from both Polish institutions and international organizations, providing up-to-date data on the scale and nature of international interactions. The study also utilizes statistical data from national and international databases. These data have made it possible to illustrate the changes occurring in the security architecture of Poland—and in global security—and to assess their impact on the state of security within the country. Furthermore, a thorough analysis was conducted of documents, legal expert opinions, and prevailing strategic studies regarding security policy—including the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, approved on May 12, 2020.[20] This document superseded the 2014

[19] P. Chmielewski, *Homo agens. Instytucjonalizm w naukach społecznych*, Wydawnictwo Poltext, Warszawa 2011, s. 298.
[20] Postanowienie Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 12 maja 2020 r. w sprawie zatwierdzenia „Strategii

strategy and defined a new approach to state resilience, taking into account hybrid threats, cybersecurity, and cooperation within NATO and the European Union. The analysis of strategic documents made it possible to identify response mechanisms—for Poland as well as for other states and international organizations—in the context of contemporary security challenges and threats at local, regional, national, and international levels. The gathered research material enabled a comprehensive analysis of Poland's current security environment and the formulation of conclusions addressing the study's objectives and research problems. The adopted research methodology serves as the foundation for achieving the study's objectives. The use of diverse research methods, techniques, and tools allows for a multifaceted analysis of security issues, which constitute one of the modern world's most critical needs. The research conducted facilitated the verification of hypotheses and provided answers to the research problems, thereby enabling the formulation of conclusions regarding the subject matter. To ensure the objectivity of the results, it was also appropriate to employ both quantitative and qualitative methods, as these provide the more complete data necessary to fully illustrate the issue at hand.[21] The research procedure aligns with the layout and structure of the study, while the tools and methods applied facilitated the actual analysis of the issues under investigation. In addition to strictly academic works, the study drew upon reports published by think tanks. Official information from the websites of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland and the Ministry of National Defence was essential, though materials from the websites of other countries were also utilized.

Regarding recent events, information was sourced from official embassy websites, news agencies, and selected news portals. The analysis employed both *theoretical methods*—such as:

- systems analysis;
- *strategic analysis;*
- *institutional-legal analysis;*
- *comparative analysis;*
- *the historical method.*

and *empirical methods*:

- *analysis of source documents;*
- *content analysis;*

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[21] D. Silverman, *Interpretacja danych jakościowych*, Warszawa 2009, s. 63.

- *analysis of statistical and military data.*

The in-depth and rigorous analysis presented in this work relied on the aforementioned research methods and tools—defined as "*typical and repeatable ways of collecting, processing, analyzing, and interpreting empirical data to obtain the most well-founded answers to the questions posed.*"[22]

1.4. Significance of the study and research. Structure of the study

The objective of this study is closely linked to the need to deepen existing analyses and build upon previous research findings in this field. A thorough analysis of Poland's security strategy is a worthwhile undertaking due to its fundamental importance; the study addresses issues concerning security architecture not only at the national level but also within European and global dimensions, while simultaneously contributing to the understanding of security architecture.[23]

It is also important to note that this work was produced with practical implications in mind.

On May 1, 2024, Poland joined the structures of the European Union, thereby marking a watershed moment in the history of our country. Joining the community of European nations brought about a fundamental shift regarding our country's place within Europe's security architecture and its geopolitical position.

It is also worthwhile to supplement the body of Polish scholarly work with a comprehensive study on Poland's security strategy, viewed against the backdrop of the current security architecture in Europe and the world. Furthermore, there is significant value in the intellectual contribution made to the broad public and academic discourse regarding the state of the nation's security—particularly in light of the situation prevailing since February 24, 2022, and our strained relations with the Russian Federation—as well as the effectiveness of the state's defense and protection mechanisms in the event of a potential threat. The research methods employed in this study enabled an exhaustive exploration of the subject matter and the achievement of the defined research objective.

Structure of the work: The work consists of an introduction, seven chapters, a conclusion, hypothesis verification, an assessment of the currency and effectiveness of Poland's security

[22] S. Nowak, *Metodologia badań społecznych*, Warszawa 1985, s. 22.
[23] B. Geddes, *Initiation of New Democratic Institutions in Eastern Europe and Latin America In: Institutional Design in New Democracies: Eastern Europe and Latin America*. Eds. A Lijphart, C. H. Waisman Boulder 1996, s. 18.

strategy, and the expected contribution to the habilitation.

Chapter one: *Research methodology. Assumptions and goals of the work,* presents the general assumptions of the study, its subject and chronological scope, the structure of the study, research hypotheses, methodology, and research tools. It also provides a justification for the choice of research topic and identifies the specific research problems and questions. The importance of research methodology must be emphasized; as a discipline, it focuses not only on characterizing the methods used in scientific research but also on analyzing their effectiveness and cognitive value. The research procedure adopted aligns with the study's layout and structure, while the methods and tools employed serve not merely to explore and resolve the identified research problem but, above all, to achieve the established objectives regarding Poland's security strategy in the context of contemporary challenges and threats.

Chapter two: *Theoretical foundations of research on state security,* addresses a multidimensional analysis of the concept of security in general terms, as well as state security, national security, and security within international relations, drawing on the perspectives of selected authors. It presents various types of security and their significance for the proper functioning and development of the state, while also examining the scope and objectives of security in the context of ensuring an adequate level across the various dimensions and aspects of societal functioning. Within the structure of contemporary international relations, security constitutes a key pillar of external relations between states[24]. This chapter analyzes security theories using an analytical approach based on a subject-oriented criterion, while identifying key components such as international and national security.

Chapter three: *National Security Strategy – state security system,* analyzes the scope and significance of Poland's national security. It examines in depth the National Security Strategy, a document approved by the President of the Republic of Poland upon the motion of the Prime Minister. The Strategy details objectives, identifies threats, and specifies the challenges, tasks, and issues to be addressed at both the state and societal levels. The chapter presents theoretical perspectives and definitions of the concept of "*strategy*" as proposed by various authors. It analyzes the terminology used in the document and addresses the legal aspects associated with its preparation and approval. It was equally important to highlight that, in practice, two strategies are developed within the Polish legal system: one approved by the President of the Republic of Poland (the most recent being the order of May 12, 2020) and the other taking the

[24] L. Magnusson, J. Ottosson, *Path Dependence: Some Introductory Remarks In: The Evolution of Path Dependence,* Eds L. Magnusson, J. Ottosson Cheltenham 2009, s. 1-18.

form of a Council of Ministers resolution (the most recent dating from April 9, 2013). The currently binding strategy was preceded by earlier strategies and the White Paper on the National Security of the Republic of Poland. The strategy is a comprehensive document analyzing all elements of national security; it addresses issues such as hybrid threats, operations in cyberspace, the need for new technologies, and the challenges posed by artificial intelligence.

Chapter four, titled "The evolution of Poland's security strategy after 1989," outlines the transformations of Poland's security strategy in the post-1989 period. The evolution of Poland's national security strategy was shaped by the process of NATO integration, while contemporary defense priorities represent a combination of historical experiences and alliance commitments. The transformation of Poland's security strategy began with a focus on defense autonomy and efforts to join Western structures—specifically NATO and the EU—and culminated in a paradigm shift regarding the perception of national security. A key driver was the progressive strengthening of national capabilities aimed at building a direct deterrence capacity. Given the annexation of Crimea and the Russian Federation's full-scale aggression against Ukraine, this approach proved essential in the current security environment. The procedures and legal regulations defining the state's national security strategy since 1989 play a crucial role in shaping Poland's security. The foundation of Polish legislation is the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997. The transformation of the security system in Central and Eastern Europe after 1989 created new challenges for the region's states, including Poland. This study examines how NATO membership influenced the evolution of Poland's national security strategy and identifies the mechanisms that shaped this process. The analysis reveals that Poland's strategic identity underwent a fundamental transformation as a result of its integration into the Euro-Atlantic security system, and the state's defense priorities were aligned with NATO standards.

Chapter five is titled “Executive authorities in Poland's national security system” and presents an in-depth analysis of the tasks and competencies of the bodies responsible for state security. It characterizes the architecture of the national security system—as outlined in the Republic of Poland’s 2020 National Security Strategy—which comprises a command subsystem (consisting of state authorities and decision-making bodies) and executive subsystems (including operational and support subsystems).[25] It is worth noting that the national security system encompasses all bodies and institutions responsible for security across the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as local government. The chapter also

[25] https://zpe.gov.pl/a/system-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego---ogolna-charakterystyka/D10Rh2ZnC

analyzes the competencies and tasks of the Council of Ministers, which exercises overall direction regarding security and performs a range of specific, related functions. A fundamental role of the Prime Minister is to conduct the domestic and foreign policy of the Republic of Poland, a remit that also encompasses Poland's national security policy.

Chapter six—"Poland's security system – bodies, institutions, and response mechanisms"—analyzes the roles and primary tasks of the Polish Armed Forces,[26] the Police, and the Border Guard within the national security system. The paramount duty of state bodies and institutions is to safeguard the country's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. The military plays a pivotal role not only in the event of a threat but also by participating in humanitarian missions and international operations, as well as by supporting civilian authorities during crises. To advance vital national interests and strategic security objectives, the Republic of Poland organizes and develops an integrated national security system. The study analyzes the state's defense system, established to counter any threats to national interests. This system is integrated with the allied security framework through shared operational procedures for crises and wartime, as well as participation in allied defense planning.

Chapter seven, "Poland's strategic concepts and capabilities within NATO and the European Union," analyzes the issue of Poland's collective security in the context of its membership in NATO, the European Union, and the OSCE. The discussion addresses the contemporary security system, which combines military deterrence and alliance commitments (Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty) with participation in stabilization and peacekeeping missions. The chapter examines the adaptation of collective security and collective defense mechanisms aimed at stabilizing the state and strengthening its international standing. This has been a key objective of Polish policy over the past century, and Poland's regaining of independence in the 20th century was a result of the liberal vision of the international order.[27] The context of national security was also analyzed from a historical perspective, as it is worth remembering that the Poland reborn in 1918—in terms of its internationally recognized right to independent existence within ethnic boundaries and with access to the sea—was a political outgrowth of the Wilsonian idealism articulated at the end of World War I.[28] The vision

[26] https://sbn.wat.edu.pl/pdf-129783-56654?filename=ZADANIA-SIL-ZBROJNYCH-RP-.pdf
[27] M.D. Magee, The Way the World Should Be. Woodrow Wilson and the Crafting of a Faith-Based Foreign Policy, Baylor University Press, Waco 2008.
[28] R. Bierzanek, *Państwo polskie w politycznych koncepcjach mocarstw zachodnich 1917–1919*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 1964.

of international order stemming from that idealism, along with the associated plans and actions, permeated the politics of the subsequent era, with the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations serving as their first test.

Chapter II

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF RESEARCH ON STATE SECURITY

2.1. Theory and evolution of the concept of security

Chapter two presents a multidimensional analysis of the concept of security in general terms, as well as of state security and national security. Particular emphasis is placed on the scope and objectives of security, as well as on the actions taken by various entities to ensure a desired state of security at the state level and across specific dimensions of societal functioning. The importance of maintaining a desired level of security for the uninterrupted functioning of the state is also highlighted.

As humanity has evolved over the centuries, the understanding of the concept of *security* has also evolved. While the scope and dimensions of security shifted and new sources of threats emerged, its essence remained unchanged.[29] For centuries, security has been regarded as one of the most highly valued assets, both at the societal and individual levels. The origins of thinking about security can be traced back to antiquity—for instance, to the views of Aristotle and Plato. They identified the sources of threats as the disruption of order and the failure to observe social, legal, or moral norms. These philosophers maintained that ensuring the state's security was one of the state's own obligations.[30] Ensuring an adequate level of national security is a prerequisite for the proper and effective development of individual entities, institutions, and the state as a whole. The fact that the subject of security remains a constant focus of scholarly attention is evidenced by the multitude of ongoing attempts to redefine or gain a deeper understanding of its essence. Efforts to formulate a single, scientifically comprehensive definition of security may prove problematic; focusing on just one dimension—such as the political, social, or military—would result in an imprecise conceptualization of the issue.[31] The analysis of the concept of security should therefore begin with the historical understanding of the term “security”, which derives from the Latin expression *sine cura* (*sine* – without; *cura*

[29] Z. Ciekanowski, J. Nowicka, H. Wyrębek, Bezpieczeństwo państwa wobec współczesnych zagrożeń, Siedlce 2016, s.15.
[30] R. Rosa (red.), Wybrane koncepcje bezpieczeństwa personalnego i strukturalnego w dziejach zachodnioeuropejskiej myśli filozoficznej i społecznej , [w:] Dialektyka bezpieczeństwa wojny i pokoju, Warszawa 2003, ss.14-15.
[31] R. Zięba, *Kategoria bezpieczeństwa w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych* [w:] *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe i międzynarodowe u schyłku XX wieku*, D. B. Bobrow, E. Haliżak, R. Zięba (red.), Warszawa 1997, ss.9-10.

– fear, concern.)[32] Such an interpretation pointed primarily to the political stability of *securitas*, which signified a state of safety—of certainty, security, and tranquility—but also indicated the absence of threats and, no less importantly from the perspective of modern analyses of the concept, protection against dangers.[33] It can thus be observed that, both by definition and in the common understanding of the term, security was long equated with a state that guaranteed existence. Today, however, this view is considered imprecise—or even conservative. In the current perspective, security signifies not only a guarantee of the uninterrupted survival of a given entity but also the opportunity for its development.[34]

The diverse interpretations of the concept of security reflect growing interest in this subject matter. Securitology—the science of security—is now a distinct discipline, classified within the field of social sciences by a regulation of the Minister of Science and Higher Education.[35] The dynamic changes occurring in the international environment, alongside the evolution of scientific disciplines, have led to a gradual shift away from a narrow conceptualization of security. Contemporary researchers typically take two approaches to understanding security as their starting point:[36] the first is a narrow perspective—often termed "negative"—which interprets security as the absence of threats. This approach is grounded in an analysis of the actions an entity takes to protect itself against threats that pose a genuine danger.

In the current socio-political climate, achieving a state entirely free from threats is impossible. A broad definition of security offers prospects for an individual's survival and possession, as well as their development. This perspective emphasizes the subject's activity and initiative, along with the individual skills required to cooperate with their environment. Such a definition is also referred to as an active approach based on the implementation of innovative

[32] *Słownik łacińsko-polski*, opr. K. Kumaniecki, Warszawa 1981, ss.137.
[33] S. Kaczor, *Bezpieczeństwo w czasach pozornego pokoju i spokoju*, [w:] *Bezpieczeństwo i obronność w świetle współczesnych wyzwań i potrzeb: ujęcie naukowe, pedagogiczne i edukacyjne*,. pod red J. Kunikowskiego, Siedlce 2010, s. 49.
[34] P. Majer, *W poszukiwaniu uniwersalnej definicji bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, fi-le:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Majer.pdf, data dostępu 22.05.2021.
[35] *Securitulogia*, https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Securitologia, data dostępu 22.05.2021.
[36] M. Cieślarczyk, *Bezpieczeństwo i obronność w świadomości współczesnej młodzieży*, [w:] *Wychowanie patriotycznoobronne: tradycje i współczesność*, [red:] R. Kalinowskiego, J. Kunikowskiego, Siedlce 2004, s. 124.

solutions.[37] According to J. Stańczyk, "security consists of two elements: the guarantee of the entity's inviolable survival and the freedom of its development."[38]

When analyzing the evolution of the concept of security, it must be emphasized that this is a process that changes in response to variables within the social environment. W. Pokruszyński takes a different approach, defining security as the ongoing activity of individuals, local communities, states, and international organizations aimed at establishing an accepted state of security; in this sense, security is not merely a static state but, above all, encompasses the potential for development. To achieve a comprehensive understanding that leads to an objective and reliable assessment of the concept and scope of security, one must consider its various dimensions and distinguish between challenges and threats.[39] S. Koziej emphasizes the high degree of variability and dynamism inherent in the phenomenon of security, which should ensure the capacity for survival, development, and the pursuit of one's interests under given conditions. Security understood in this way enables the achievement of goals through meeting challenges, diversifying risk, seizing opportunities, and countering threats. A key guide to properly understanding security lies in accurately identifying the needs of the individual, as these are fundamental to establishing the desired level of security.

In R. Zięba's interpretation, security encompasses *the safeguarding of essential needs related to existence and survival, as well as certainty, stability, identity, and the protection of the standard and quality of life. While security is a paramount need for individuals and social groups, it is simultaneously a fundamental requirement for states and international systems; its absence gives rise to anxiety and a sense of threat*.[40] Security can also be defined as the absence of risk or the loss of something of particular importance—such as health, a job, material possessions, respect, or affection.[41] It is also a state free from threat, characterized by peace of mind and certainty.[42] From this perspective, a broad view of security stands out, with particular emphasis on its role in the undisturbed functioning of the individual and the state. Satisfying the need for security is a fundamental requirement; only once this need is met can

[37] M. Malec, *Percepcja bezpieczeństwa: definicje, wymiary, paradygmaty*, Warszawa 2006, s. 5.
[38] R. Jakubczak, J. Flis, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Polski w XXI wieku,* Warszawa 2006, s. 14.
[39] W. Pokruszyński, *Teoretyczne aspekty bezpieczeństwa*, WSGE Józefów 2010, ss. 5-9.
[40] J. Kunikowski, *Bezpieczeństwo współczesnego człowieka* [w:] *Przygotowanie dzieci i młodzieży do działania w sytuacjach zagrożenia zdrowia i życia*, (red) M. Cieślarczyka, G. Wierzbickiego, Akademia Podlaska, Siedlce 2008,s.13.
[41] R. Zięba, *Instytucjonalizacja bezpieczeństwa europejskiego*, Warszawa 1999, s. 28.
[42] K. Olak, A. Olak, *Współczesne rozumienie bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, fi-le:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/Współ%20czesne%20rozumienie_467-480%20(2).pdf, data dostępu 22.05.2021.

the individual function effectively.[43] Security is a paramount need, a fundamental value for both the individual and society, and the most important goal of our existence. Renowned security scholar R. Kuźniar regards security as a primal, existential need for individuals, social groups, and the state. As he emphasizes, survival, integrity, and independence are crucial, but so is the security of development—which entails safeguarding the identity of both individuals and the nation.[44] From another perspective, security is a psychological or legal state in which an individual possesses not only a sense of certainty but also the backing of an effectively functioning legal system. Security is a state free from threats, fear, or attack.[45] It should be emphasized that this understanding of security forms the basis for analyzing the objective or subjective aspects of a threat and, according to Swiss political scientist D. Frei, can take the following forms:

1) a state of insecurity – when a significant threat actually exists and the perception of that threat is accurate;

2) a state of obsession – when a minor threat is perceived as major;

3) a state of false security – when a threat is serious but perceived as minor;

4) a state of security – when a threat is minor and the perception of it is accurate.[46]

J. Supińska views security through the prism of threats, defining it as freedom from threats originating from:

1) nature (the ecosphere), which constitutes the oldest and, at the same time, natural source of threats to human existence;

2) technology—the technosphere—created by humans who, paradoxically, while striving to subjugate nature and become independent of it, have instead become dependent on technology;

3) society, organized into a socio-economic-political system that shapes human behavior. Specific threats to security include:

- organized violence—military conflicts, terrorism, repression;
- a legal system that restricts individual freedom;
- social rivalry—competition for material goods, economic exploitation;
- excessive interference by various institutions in the lives of individuals;
- the rapid pace of environmental change, or so-called "future shock";

[43] A. Maslow, *A Theory of Human Motivation*, [w:] „Psychological Review",1943, ss. 370–396.
[44] R. Kuźniar, Z. Lachowski, *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe czasu przemian*, Warszawa 2003, s. 24.
[45] A. Pieczywok, *Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa wobec zagrożeń i wyzwań współczesności*, Warszawa 2012, s.22.
[46] W. Pokruszyński, *Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i praktyka*, Józefów 2012, s.63.

- aggression from others—pathological behavior, crime, hatred, etc.;
- the individual themselves, who can become a threat to their own well-being for various reasons—such as psychological, genetic, or acquired factors; illicit acts directed at others; or self-destructive and high-risk behaviors.[47] This dynamically changing array of threats highlights the multitude of factors influencing the level of security and the sense of security among individuals, social groups, and entire nations alike.[48]

The essence of identifying security threats in the social dimension can be interpreted as the restriction or complete *obstruction of the ability to satisfy basic life needs*.[49] Unmet needs give rise to a clear, palpable state of deprivation; if this state persists, it leads to difficult life situations that threaten the sense of security of individuals or social groups. To gain a fuller understanding of the issue, it is worth clarifying the concept of a "threat." In security studies literature, a threat most often pertains to the realm of consciousness—whether of an individual, a social group, or an entire nation. Psychology defines a threat as a state of mind or consciousness resulting from phenomena perceived as negative or dangerous. How a specific entity perceives threats—and its resulting sense of security—is reflected in its awareness of a real or potential danger.[50] Assessing the state of security requires taking into account the reality in which threats to members of society arise, as well as the level of knowledge and awareness that shapes the perception of these threats and the resulting sense of security. The perception of threats is subjective, reflecting the feelings and assessments of a given entity under specific conditions. Nevertheless, these perceptions significantly influence the actions taken by security agencies and institutions—tasked with preventing threats or mitigating their harmful effects when prevention fails, as well as managing public psychology to avert potential panic—in response to such threats.[51] It is also necessary to examine the range of hazards that can negatively affect the level of security and, consequently, cause social dysfunction that primarily hinders the individual's ability to function effectively. According to P. Grzywna, the primary threats are associated with:

1) human existence – for instance, unmet physiological needs;
2) the living environment;

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[47] J. Supińska, *Dylematy polityki społecznej*, Warszawa 1991, ss. 83–84.
[48] P. Grzywna, *Istota i wybrane aksjologiczne uwarunkowania bezpieczeństwa społecznego*, [w:] W: A. Bryłka, T. Kałuski, M. Korbaś (red.), *"Władza a społeczeństwo"*, Katowice 2016, ss.86-87.
[49] B. Rysz –Kowalczyk, *Teoria kwestii i problemów społecznych*. [w:]*Polityka społeczna*, (red)G. Firlit -Fesnak, M. Szylko-Skoczny. Warszawa 2007, s. 182.
[50] Szerzej w: H. Chałupczak, K. Marzęda-Młynarska, M. Pietraś, R. Suduł (red), *Zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa w procesach globalizacji*, Lublin 2020.
[51] E. Kołodzińska, *Wprowadzenie do zarządzania bezpieczeństwem*, http://www.uwm.edu.pl/mkzk/download/wprowadzenie.pdf, (dostęp: 23.05.2021).

3) work – particularly occupational health and safety conditions; factors such as job insecurity, accident rates, and occupational diseases are significant;
4) the natural environment – especially living in polluted or contaminated areas;
5) health – concerns regarding health security and limited access to healthcare services;
6) the economic sphere – a lack of adequate financial security, or living in conditions of want or poverty;
7) obstacles preventing proper development – such as limited access to the education system, low levels of education, or a lack of access to sports and cultural facilities.[52]

Another classification of threats is based on the criterion of their origin. In this case, threats can be divided into:

1) natural threats – associated with the forces of nature, capable of causing disasters and posing risks to an individual's life, health, and well-being;

2) civilization-related threats – associated with human activity, capable of causing disasters and technical failures that may, in turn, threaten the functioning of society.

It must therefore be emphasized that civilizational development and globalization processes[53] directly contribute to an increase in the number of factors posing threats to security. Consequently, individuals, states, organizations, and institutions must be prepared to take action aimed at eliminating these threats or their adverse effects, in order to restore as quickly as possible a state that ensures the effective and safe functioning of society.

Security viewed as a phenomenon from the perspective of the subject—where the subject consists of individuals pursuing their own goals and interests under specific conditions. Such subjects may include not only individuals but also groups, nations, international communities, or institutions. According to the dictionary, security denotes a psychological or legal state in which an individual possesses a sense of certainty and relies on another person or a well-functioning legal system. Security is the opposite of a threat.[54] Security can be analyzed in broad terms and viewed as an overarching order that protects the state and its citizens from phenomena threatening the legal and public order. Such a state enables individuals to pursue their own goals. In a narrow sense, public security refers to the protection of the state system against anarchy and the destabilization of state institutions tasked with maintaining order and public safety.[55]

[52] P. Grzywna, *Istota i wybrane aksjologiczne*…, s. 87.
[53] Zob. S. Wierzbicki, *Rola Globalizacji we współczesnym świecie*, Warszawa 2016.
[54] Słownik współczesnego języka polskiego, (red) B. Dunaja, PWN Warszawa 1996, s. 51.
[55] Tamże.

In general terms, public safety and order signify a state that affords protection to fundamental values—including life, health, and property—against threats, as well as safeguarding the conditions necessary for social coexistence and relationships governed by legal norms.[56] Security is also interpreted as:

- a guarantee of the undisturbed existence and development of the security entity;[57]
- a state of certainty and the absence of threats, as well as protection against them;[58]
- the maintenance of territorial integrity and sovereignty, the freedom to choose the state's development paths, and individual well-being and social development;[59]
- ensuring the protection and defense of the state against military and non-military threats.[60]

Security perceived in this way emphasizes the role played by the state and institutions in building and maintaining a desired level of security—particularly in eliminating all threats. Since security is a multifaceted concept, it should incorporate, as a fundamental element, the awareness of the security subject—that is, the state of mind in which phenomena are assessed as dangerous or threatening to the individual.[61] Security, understood as a state of mind in which an individual feels free from the perception of threats, signifies an existence devoid of danger and an undisturbed coexistence within society and the natural environment.[62] Freedom from threats—as a state of human functioning within the surrounding reality—does not imply the absence of potential threats, but merely an acceptable level thereof; D. Frei considers this state to represent a proper perception of security, one in which minor threats exist.[63]

From a scientific perspective, security is a complex phenomenon. When considering its state—as well as its organization at the individual level, from the perspective of the state, and within the context of societal development—we observe that these elements undergo constant change. These changes are correlated with the evolution of the security environment and civilizational progress, as well as the cultural aspects of the specific entities involved. It is therefore valid to conclude that the level of security organization is not fixed or immutable;

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[56] R. Jakubczak, J. Flis, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Polski w XXI wieku*, Warszawa 2006, s. 14.
[57] J. Stańczyk, *Współczesne pojmowanie bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 1996, ss. 18-19.
[58] R. Zięba, *Instytucjonalizacja bezpieczeństwa europejskiego*, Warszawa 1999 s. 9.
[59] J. Czaputowicz, *Kryteria bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego – aspekty teoretyczne* [w:] *Kryteria bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego państwa*, S. Dębski, B. Górska-Winter (red.), PISM, Warszawa 2003, s. 13.
[60] T. Szubrycht, *Współczesne aspekty bezpieczeństwa państwa*, „ZN AMW", 4 (2006), s. 89.
[61] A. Czupryński, *Bezpieczeństwo w ujęciu teoretycznym*, Józefów 2015, s. 16.
[62] B. Kwiatkowska, *Problemy bezpieczeństwa w samorządowej kampanii wyborczej*, „ZN SGSP", 22 (1999), s. 103.
[63] A. Czupryński, *Bezpieczeństwo…*, s.16.

rather, it shifts in response to the needs, values, or expectations of the security entity.[64] The definition of security as *a specific state—one that represents the evolution of its underlying processes*—is of interest. This state of security defines the situation of the entity, as well as the dimension of security, the degree of stability, and the territorial scope.[65] The concept of a *security process* is used in the relevant literature. A. Czupryński holds the view that it would be appropriate to use the term *security processes*, as a process signifies a cycle of events and an outcome within a specific situation. Security processes reflect the ongoing evolution of the conditions and factors that shape the perception of security. Security is a state of consciousness that influences our perception of reality, while simultaneously being a process of change unfolding alongside civilizational development.[66] Contemporary security studies are characterized by the continuous enrichment of the concept's semantic and cognitive dimensions. A key aspect of conducting scientific analysis is viewing security as a process within the context of the laws governing the dynamics of social systems.

The presented definitions of security indicate that a comprehensive and reliable analysis is possible if it incorporates dynamically changing environmental conditions, civilizational development, and globalization, as well as the scope of needs of individual entities.[67] Undoubtedly, security is one of the most important areas of state activity, and its level reflects the effectiveness of the institutions and bodies tasked with protecting and defending the state's interests and ensuring the safety of its citizens.[68]

In light of the changing security environment, individuals and the state have had to acquire the capabilities to deal with threats of various kinds that affect the overall level of security.[69] When considering the evolving spectrum of threats, it is essential to emphasize the need to prepare society—including both young people and adults—to conduct themselves appropriately and take action in situations that threaten human existence, the survival of the nation, and the functioning of the state.[70]

W. Kitler classifies security from a subject-oriented perspective across three fundamental aspects:[71]

[64] Tamże, str. 16.
[65] Tamże, s.16.
[66] Tamże, str. 17.
[67] J. Stańczyk, *Współczesne pojmowanie bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 1996, ss. 18-19.
[68] S. Zalewski, Polityka bezpieczeństwa państwa a edukacja obronna, Warszawa 2001, s. 41.
[69] R. Jakubczak, J. Flis, Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Polski w XXI wieku, Warszawa 2006, s. 428.
[70] B. Rudnicki, Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa i jej interpretacja, [w:] R. Stępień (red.), Edukacja dla..., s. 62.
[71] Por. W. Kitler, Istota bezpieczeństwa narodowego, [w:] B. Wiśniewski, W. Fehler (red.), Edukacja obronna społeczeństwa, Białystok 2006, s. 16.

- the security of the individual, who holds a system of values and social norms—including imperatives related to personal security;
- group security—referring to a group of people seeking a sense of safety in various social situations, including interpersonal ones;
- the security of state, local government (municipality, county, and province), and international structures.

With national security in mind, one must not overlook the importance of preparing the public for the rapidly evolving modern landscape of threats—a point emphasized by A. Pieczywok. In his view, safety education is inextricably linked to national education; consequently, it is appropriate to place greater emphasis on civic, economic, legal, defense-oriented, pro-social, health, and environmental education, all of which form the foundation of national security.

2.2. Scope, objectives, and types of security

Security is a value in itself, as well as the foundation upon which other precious values rest—such as human life and health, and unhindered personal development—along with trust in a well-functioning state. Outlining the scope and objectives of security relies on an analysis of its traditional classifications, namely:

- internal and external security;
- national security and state security;
- international security.

Internal security is a form of state security primarily aimed at eliminating internal threats and protecting individuals and society from them. It focuses on ensuring the uninterrupted and stable functioning of state bodies and institutions while simultaneously safeguarding the interests of both the individual and society. Achieving this state requires an effective domestic policy. Thus, internal security can be understood as the protection of interests against threats and various forms of danger arising from processes driven by the diverse actors operating within the state.[72] Defined in this way, internal security reflects the effectiveness of the state and its institutions in fulfilling their primary task: safeguarding the national interest. All state initiatives must take into account the range of potential threats that could arise from activities negatively affecting the level of internal security.

[72] Z. Nowakowski, Bezpieczeństwo państwa w koncepcjach programowych parlamentarnych w Polsce po 1989 roku, Warszawa 2009, s.51.

The definition of external security implies the absence of threats to the state's undisturbed functioning posed by other entities, whereas the essence of internal security is the state's internal stability.[73] We can therefore assume that the pursuit of state security is based on establishing optimal internal conditions aimed at fostering the conflict-free development of the system's components, as well as on neutralizing potential external threats by shaping a favorable external environment that reinforces the state's harmonious development.[74]

Thus, external security is a type of security aimed at safeguarding national interests and the quality of life against threats originating outside the state's borders.[75] In light of the definition presented, we can distinguish the following types of threats:

1) military threats;
2) threats resulting from illicit trade or associated with other prohibited acts, such as espionage activities or the dissemination of racist or nationalist content and fake news.

The proper administration of external security should be grounded in socially accepted priorities and the principles of international collective security, as well as in an effective foreign policy—spanning the military and economic spheres—that prioritizes safeguarding vital national interests on the international stage.[76] External security defined in this way must emphasize the state's role in assessing and defining its key national interests and in building the international relationships necessary to secure them. To complement analyses regarding the essence of state security, it is also necessary to clarify the concepts of national and international security. Such conceptual clarification is essential for a thorough examination of the role played by state bodies and institutions in maintaining the security of the state as a whole at an acceptable level.

According to W. Kitler, research on security lacks a systematic approach to interpreting the concept of *national security*, resulting in conceptual chaos. Virtually any problem associated with any type of threat—whether affecting the individual or society—is interpreted by researchers through the lens of national security.[77] It is worth emphasizing that Kitler, like Nowakowski, includes within the scope of national security only those elements that both indicate and constitute a decisive condition for the nation's undisturbed existence and

[73] Por. Z. Berent, Pokój międzynarodowy i bezpieczeństwo-próba definicji, „Sprawy międzynarodowe", 1988, z.6, s. 112.
[74] M. Dobrosielski, Problemu współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych, „Sprawy międzynarodowe", 1973, z.12, s.14.
[75] Tamże.
[76] Tamże.
[77] A. Wejkszner, S. Wojciechowski, *Współczesne bezpieczeństwo Polski. Międzynarodowy wymiar Instytucjonalny*, Warszawa 2019, ss.10-13.

development—and, consequently, are of vital importance to the state as a political institution. At the same time, W. Kitler highlights historical experiences that confirm the evolutionary interdependence between the state and security, a relationship rooted in values characteristic of individuals and social groups.[78] In their research, scholars specializing in security studies have analyzed various components of the canon of values protected by states. However, proponents of the realist approach have argued that the state establishes a specific set of values—aligned with the national interest—to address particular demands.[79]

This set of demands varies and constantly evolves; it effectively serves as a barometer of the current political situation, shaped by emerging threats or concerns. It is essential to highlight two key values: territorial integrity and political autonomy.[80] Any analysis of national security issues must take into account threats to the state and the nation—threats that largely pertain to the political and military spheres. It is worth noting that in the "Dictionnaire Diplomatique", published in Paris in the mid-20th century, the entry for *sécurité* was defined as a "set of circumstances." The underlying concept was that the state should not be subject to any attack, or—should such an attack occur—it would stand no chance of success.[81] This interpretation clearly indicates that the sources of threats lie externally, and that the supreme value dictating state action during an open international conflict is the survival of the nation and its organizational structures. A shift in the perception of national securityspecifically its demilitarization—began following the end of World War II. During this period, the development and improvement of the Polish society's living conditions became the paramount concern.

R. Ullman, who focused on security issues, presented the concept of a balance between protecting the national interest and the individual interest.[82] After 1989, one can observe a shift towards placing greater emphasis on elements such as quality of life, sustainable development, and prosperity—factors that constituted the so-called set of protected values.[83] R. Zięba defined a specific set of values that addressed existing needs and took into account the socio-political reality of the time. The most important among them are:

[78] W. Kitler, file:///C:/Users/user/Downloads/zakresbezp.pastwa.pdf, data dostępu 23.05.2021.
[79] R. Zięba, *Kategoria bezpieczeństwa w nauce o stosunkach międzynarodowych* [w:] B*ezpieczeństwo narodowe i międzynarodowe u schyłku XX wieku*, D. B. Bobrow, E. Haliżak, R. Zięba (red.), Warszawa 1997, s. 9.
[80] A. Klafkowski, *Podstawy prawne bezpieczeństwa Polski*, „Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny", 1985, nr.4, s.37.
[81] R. Zięba, *Instytucjonalizacja bezpieczeństwa*…, s.34.
[82] Tamże, s. 14.
[83] M. Pietraś, *Dylematy bezpieczeństwa w postzimnowojennym świecie*, Annales UMCS", 1994, Vol.1,4, Sectio K., ss. 48-49.

- the survival of the state and the nation—the existence of values that take precedence over others;
- territorial integrity;
- political independence;
- quality of life—comprising the standard of living, the level of socio-economic development, civil rights and liberties, the cultural system, the national way of life, and environmental protection.

This perspective on values reflects the evolution in the perception of national security, incorporating the social dimension and the significance of non-military factors. A contemporary view of national security is presented by Kitler, who defines it—equating it with state security—by taking into account the agency of individuals and social groups alongside the activities of the state.

From a subject-matter perspective, however, we can distinguish various types of it.

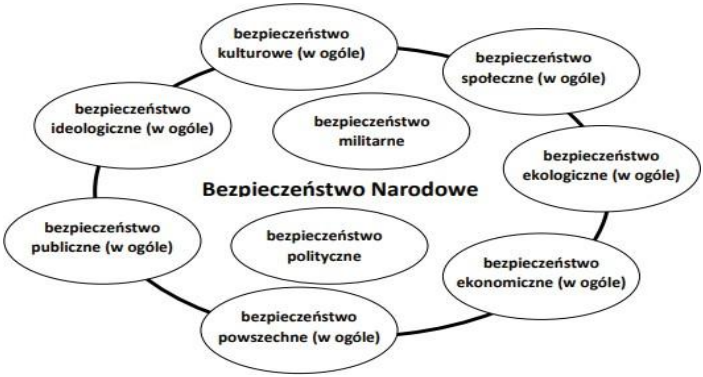


Fig. 1. Relationships between different types of security – a subject-matter perspective Source: own elaboration

When applying a subject-matter criterion, specific types of security can be analyzed as autonomous fields of security. Conversely, an analysis based on a subject-oriented criterion relies on values, needs, goals, and interests within the realm of national security. Security studies identify specific domains or types of security that, due to their established foundations, shape the traditional perception of state security, while their scope is encompassed by the overarching concept of national security. It should also be noted that these domains of national security do not exist in isolation; rather, with the state as the central entity, they form an interconnected system.

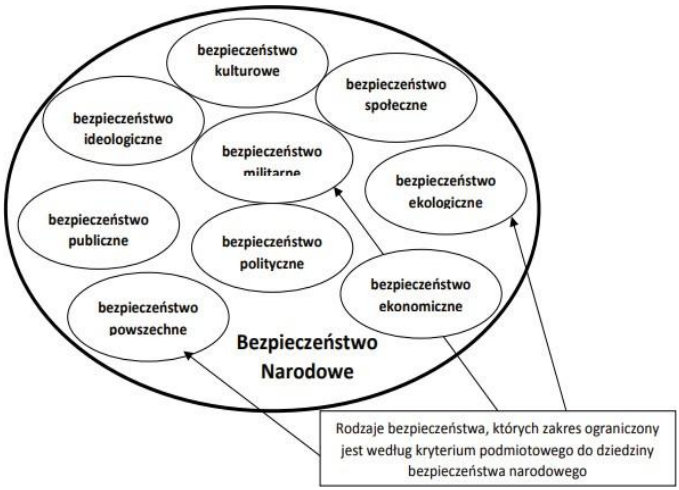


Fig. 2. Relationships between different types of security, with the state as the security subject, Source: own elaboration.

Every type of security (*economic, social, political, environmental*) must be analyzed through the prism of national security interests and viewed across the various dimensions of the state's functioning.[84] Since such security issues can also give rise to threats in international relations, any analysis of security and its various forms should take into account not only needs, goals, and values but, above all, focus on national security interests and the resolution of problems facing the primary actor—the state.

Literature and research on security indicate difficulties in distinguishing specific types and scopes of security, as well as in defining their objectives; these difficulties stem from, among other factors:[85]

- formulating definitions that are too narrow, too broad, or overly general;
- defining specific types of security without reference to the subject;
- constructing definitions that are exclusively political-military in nature;
- subordinating various types of security to a single subject;
- the absence of definitions for certain concepts within the legal system;
- the diversity of relationships between specific types of security.[86]

[84] E. Nowak, M. Nowak, *Zarys teorii bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, Warszawa 2015.
[85] J. Piątek, R. Podgórzańska, S. Stępiński, *Bezpieczeństwo w badaniach i w praktyce*, Toruń 2020.
[86] E. Haliżak, *Ekonomiczny wymiar bezpieczeństwa narodowego i międzynarodowego*, ss. 77-82.

The individual types of national security are interrelated, and the basis of these interconnections and dependencies consists of the security subjects, namely the state and its institutions, as well as individuals and society. Furthermore, challenges and threats affect all manifestations of protected values across multiple dimensions.[87]

In both scholarly analysis and practice, the type of security is determined by the specific nature of the threats involved. W. Kitler posits that a given type of security constitutes a specific instance of national security, arising from the presence of a particular threat to that security.[88] Thus, from a societal perspective, national security represents a paramount need and value for both individuals and the state; its functional scope is derived from the mission and objectives pursued by the state—such as protecting and defending national values and interests against threats, and fostering conditions for the development of the state and society. Thus, national security entails the comprehensive organization and preparation of the state to ensure security across legal, political, strategic, military, civil, educational, and diplomatic dimensions. The broadly defined national interest dictates the operational model for individual state institutions and citizens alike within the framework of national security. Another definition characterizes national security as *a type of security in which the subject is the nation organized as a state*.[89] This definition highlights the essence and role of the state's institutional organization in ensuring the security expected by society. It is also worth citing the definition found in the *Dictionary of National Security Terms*, which characterizes national security as a process or state that ensures the functioning of the state and enables not only its survival but also its development and the pursuit of vital national interests; this is achieved by addressing challenges, diversifying risks, seizing opportunities, and neutralizing various threats to those interests.[90] The definition encompasses national security activities grounded in values and interests that are crucial to society. The *Security Vademecum*, in turn, draws upon the history of the concept of *security*. It highlights not only the protection of society against threats but also the importance of values, property, and environmental protection, as well as the safeguarding of state security—including in non-military dimensions. In the modern era, ensuring security relies not only on military potential but also significantly on non-military tools employed in international relations. The realm of security also encompasses other factors, such as social,

[87] W. Kitler, *Zakres bezpieczeństwa*…,s.9.
[88] Tamże, s.10.
[89] (Mini) słownik BBN, Propozycje nowych terminów z dziedziny bezpieczeństwa https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/bezpieczenstwo-narodowe/minislownik-bbn-propozy/6035,minislownik-bbn-propozycje-nowych-terminow-z-dziedziny-bezpieczenstwa.html, data dostępu 30.05.2021.
[90] W. Kitler, *Zakres bezpieczeństwa*… s. 10.

economic, financial, demographic, health-related, industrial, environmental, and cultural aspects.[91] W.J. Taylor Jr. posits that national security entails not only the protection of the nation and the inviolability of its territory but also the safeguarding of political and economic interests that constitute vital state values.[92]

In the literature, the concepts of national security and state security are sometimes treated as synonymous. Both terms are widely used in security terminology. However, the concept of state security primarily focuses on the security of the state as an institution. National security, by contrast, places greater emphasis on protecting the interests of both the state and society. The term state security generally refers primarily to democratic states in which human rights are respected and upheld. The fundamental task of the state is to ensure the security, undisturbed existence, and sovereignty of society.[93] Based on the considerations and analyses presented above, it can be assumed that national security is a process consisting of the purposeful and organised activities of state authorities and institutions, based on an adopted security doctrine and implemented through the use of appropriate means and instruments.

The concept of *international security* occupies a significant place in security studies. Initially, the perception of this concept was limited to political and military aspects. To greatly simplify, international security could be defined as a resultant of the pursuit of national security by a state operating within the international system.[94] This perspective on international security gave rise to the so-called "security dilemma," rooted in the conflicting interests of states. Over time, however, this understanding shifted as priorities moved toward state cooperation in international relations.[95] Security needs pertain to values shared by the entire population of a given state, as well as to values shared by the international community.[96] It is worth emphasizing that national security is an integral element of every aspect of state functioning, individual life, the activities of social groups, and the very existence of society.[97] Its primary objective is the effective prevention of threats. Security represents the most important need and

[91] *Vademecum bezpieczeństwa*, https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/16331/Vademecum_bezpieczenstwa.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y, data dostępu 23.-05.2021.
[92] Zob. W. J. Taylor Jr., *American National Security: Policy and Process*, Baltimor 1981, s. 7.
[93] Z. Sabak, J. Królikowski, *Ocena zagrożeń Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa 2002, ss. 34-35.
[94] Zob. L. Wyszczelski, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Polski w XX–XXI wieku na tle wyzwań bezpieczeństwa globalnego*, [w:] *Współczesne bezpieczeństwo militarne*, M. Kubiak, A. Turek (red.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Przyrodniczo-Humanistycznego, Warszawa–Siedlce 2012.
[95] Z. J. Pietraś, *Interesy narodowe a wspólne interesy ludzkości*, [w:] Z. J. Pietraś (red.) *Interesy narodowe a współistnienie państw,* UMCS, Lublin1989, ss. 12-13.
[96] Tamże, ss. 128-129.
[97] Szerzej w: M. Kuliczkowski, *Przygotowania obronne w Polsce. Uwarunkowania formalnoprawne, dylematy pojęciowe i próba systematyzacji*, Warszawa 2013.

the highest value, as well as a fundamental goal of state activity.[98] In this understanding, by pursuing both its foreign policy at the international level and its domestic policy, the essence of which is the protection and defence of national values and needs, the state simultaneously defines the concept of security.[99]

A review of security research and an analysis of literature in the field of security studies reveal that, when initiating his research into the essence of security, M. Pietraś identified four dimensions: social, political, economic, and ecological. However, he subsequently distinguished an additional dimension—the military one.[100] Such a classification highlights the importance of organization and the role of the state—specifically its positioning within mutual relations in both the external and internal dimensions. This perspective illustrates the current policy of states, which are decisively moving away from a purely military dimension of security and focusing more than before on advancing key national interests through the formation of alliances and the conclusion of international agreements.[101]

In conclusion, it can be posited that the international environment essentially constitutes a polyarchic whole. A state's membership in the international system, along with the emergence of interdependencies and shared interests, fosters joint efforts aimed at ensuring security the fundamental prerequisite for an undisturbed and secure existence and development. This contributes significantly to the preservation of peace, stability, balance, and cooperation, serving the interests of transnational *raison d'état* and international security.[102]

Research indicates that the scope of international security is significantly broader than that of national security. The dynamic development—as well as the volatility—of relations on the international stage is reflected in the state of global security, which is constantly evolving due to the emergence of new conditions and contemporary sources of threats.

2.3. Contemporary security conditions – from military to comprehensive security

A fundamental evolution in the way the state and its citizens are defined and protected is based on the shift from military security to comprehensive security. The table below illustrates the key differences in approaches to security.

[98] Szerzej w: J. Stefanowicz, *Rzeczypospolitej pole bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 2011.
[99] Z. Sabak, J. Królikowski, *Ocena zagrożeń Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa 2002, ss. 34-35.
[100] M. Pietraś, *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe*[w:]*Międzynarodowe stosunki polityczne*, red. M. Pietraś, UMCS, Lublin 2006, ss. 333-336.
[101] S. Koziej, *Między piekłem a rajem. Szare bezpieczeństwo u progu XXI wieku*, Toruń 2008, s. 10.
[102] M. Pietraś, *Dylematy bezpieczeństwa*…, ss.12-13.

Table 1

Fundamental differences in the approach to security

Characteristic	Military approach (Traditional)	Comprehensive (contemporary) approach
Subject of protection	*State, territory, political sovereignty.*	*The citizen, society, state systems.*
Source of the threat	*Armies of other states, armed aggression.*	*Cyberattacks, disinformation, climate crises, pandemics.*
Main instrument	*Armed forces (military) and military alliances*	*Civil sector, administration, economy, education.*
Methods of operation	*Military deterrence, border defense, frontline combat.*	*Building societal resilience, population protection, civil defense.*

Source: own elaboration

This approach is based on a concept that centers on integrating non-military threats into the mainstream of defense strategies. The traditional military approach focused exclusively on military might and the inviolability of borders. The philosophy behind the modern comprehensive approach holds that state stability depends not only on military capability but also on the comprehensive resilience of the entire society, including the strength of the economy and critical infrastructure. It is worth noting here the concept of *comprehensive security sectors*, the theoretical foundations of which were developed by the Copenhagen School. Five key sectors have been identified:[103]

- **military** – encompassing defense capabilities based on armed forces tasked with repelling attacks;
- **political** – focusing on the stability of state institutions as well as resilience against disinformation and internal destabilization;
- **economic** – concerning primarily energy security, access to raw materials, supply chains, and financial system stability;
- **societal** – focusing on the protection of national identity, civic education, and social cohesion during crises;
- **environmental** – with the primary goal of mitigating the effects of climate change, ensuring access to drinking water, and taking effective action against natural disasters.

Security complex theory is a strand of security studies that focuses on the formation of security complexes by groups of states whose security is treated collectively—rather than on an individual state-by-state basis—due to the relationships and interdependencies linking them. Regional security complex theory constitutes a component of the Copenhagen School's comprehensive approach, alongside sectoral security analysis and the concept of securitization.

[103] S. Sulowski, *Tożsamość nauk o bezpieczeństwie*, Toruń 2015.

Barry Buzan played a pivotal role by rejecting the notion that security issues should be viewed solely through a politico-military lens, arguing instead that they must also be analyzed in military, political, economic, societal, and environmental terms. According to security complex theory, security should be analyzed at the regional level rather than the individual state level.[104] The concept of regional security complexes refers to geographically contiguous countries or other sets of units whose mutual political, cultural, economic, and historical ties and relationships justify addressing security issues collectively. Such a group of states is bound by a specific pattern of relations that distinguishes it from other regions. The geographical location of these states shapes their mutual interactions in the realm of security.

Regarding the implementation of a comprehensive system in Poland, it should be emphasized that the country is actively working to incorporate this model into its national strategy. As outlined in the position presented by the Ministry of National Defence, security in the current geopolitical climate must be grounded in the close integration of the armed forces with local governments and the healthcare sector, as well as with entities managing critical infrastructure. A key element of this shift involves legislative amendments—including those concerning civil protection and civil defense—that devolve the responsibility for crisis preparedness to the local level and foster whole-of-society engagement.

Speaking at a congress held in Kraków on May 25, 2026, under the slogan "From the Armed Forces to Local Governments: Building a Comprehensive State Security System," the Minister of National Defence emphasized that:

"*Poland's raison d'état today is to build a strong and secure Republic—a state that plays a leading role in Europe, the European Union, and NATO, rather than one that is merely acted upon by others; a state that possesses a powerful army. By 2030, Poland will be the strongest nation in Europe, provided all our plans—along with the associated European and national financial programs—are fully realized. Should Poland come under attack—should the 'Hour W' arrive—the strength of the state manifests itself through the strength of all its citizens and institutions. This constitutes the second—or perhaps, in reality, the primary—pillar of security: a strong society that is aware, prepared, mature, and ready. I say this not to frighten anyone—for we cannot be intimidated—but to ensure we prepare, deter threats, and stand ready for the worst-case scenario. We have also implemented the SAFE program, securing €43.7 billion for defense; it is the largest*

[104] P.D. Williams, *Studia bezpieczeństwa*, Warszawa 2012 • *Zarys teorii bezpieczeństwa państwa*, red. J. Gryz, Warszawa 2016.

program of its kind in Europe. Later this week, we will sign approximately 40 modernization contracts for the armed forces. At the same time, we are channeling resources to the Police and the Border Guard. The role of local governments, Volunteer Fire Departments, and local communities is crucial. We need drone operators and large-scale training in this field. We are also developing medical military units and cyber systems—the Cyber Legion and the Medical Legion involve thousands of specialists. All of this builds state resilience. I thank everyone participating in this effort."[105]

It is worth noting that the congress serves as a nationwide platform for cooperation among government administration, local governments, municipal utility companies, the healthcare sector, critical infrastructure enterprises, and security experts. This year's edition of the forum placed particular emphasis on the practical preparation of municipalities, cities, counties, and regions to carry out tasks arising from the new Act on Civil Protection and Civil Defense. These regulations significantly strengthen the role of local government units within the national state security system.[106]

The rapidly changing conditions shaping today's security environment mean that perceptions of security also fluctuate. Modern lifestyles, the nature of the state, and the scope of international cooperation are all evolving. While this process cannot be halted, its quality, stability, and orderliness can be managed. We all bear responsibility for maintaining securitya requirement that has remained constant for years. This responsibility encompasses protecting sovereignty, economic stability, digital systems, critical infrastructure, and citizen well-being in the face of new, dynamic threats, such as:

- cybersecurity—specifically threats involving attacks on computer networks, government institutions, or entities of strategic importance to national security;
- disinformation—the dissemination of false information online aimed at undermining trust in authorities and sowing discord among people;
- energy security and associated threats, such as the disruption of electricity, gas, and fuel supplies;
- terrorist threats taking various forms, including bombings, kidnappings and abductions, assassinations, and acts of maiming.

[105] https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/od-sil-zbrojnych-po-samorzady-budujemy-kompleksowy-system-bezpieczenstwa-panstwa
[106] https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa

The security environment is a geopolitical arena where events and processes critical to the security of entities—such as states, regions, or international institutions—unfold; it is shaped by internal and external factors that influence the extent to which strategic objectives are achieved and security interests are realized.[107] Its character depends largely on the prevailing risks, challenges, opportunities, and threats. Meanwhile, security researcher Marian Kozub holds the view that the contemporary security environment has been shaped by the information revolution, globalization, and the collapse of the bipolar world order.[108]

The current nature of security depends on more than just security threats; it is also shaped by the changes occurring in society and the wider world. This evolution is linked to civilizational progress and the relentless pursuit and widespread adoption of technology. Shifts are evident in people's lifestyles, the functioning of the state, and the international environment. Against this backdrop, a clear picture emerges of the individual living in a virtual world a realm where security issues take on a different character. In this context, users often downplay the significance of cyberspace and underestimate the value of information. In reality, cybersecurity threats are not yet fully understood, making it difficult to ensure comprehensive protection. Coupled with careless online storage of personal data, this leads to a constantly rising risk of cyberattacks.

Security is jeopardized when a core value guiding the state is violated due to an external threat. Concepts of state security emphasize the need to eliminate such threats and outline methods and means of counteraction. A fundamental objective in maintaining security at a desired level is the ability to effectively influence the state's environment by enhancing its military and political—as well as material and moral—strength. An increase in a state's military power is linked to the level of its economy, technology, science, and culture. A rise in state power simultaneously elevates the stature of its foreign policy; in the long run, it expands the state's capacity to influence its environment and enables the more effective pursuit of diverse political interests. When a state's security and military power are at a sufficiently high level, its international standing also improves. Regarding military power, the decisive factors are the quality of the armed forces—including size, equipment, morale, and training—as well as the deployment and mobility of units. Today, military potential serves primarily to ensure security and is employed only when other measures prove ineffective.

[107] Z. Błażewicz, Strategiczne środowisko bezpieczeństwa – istota i ewolucja, [w:] Siły Zbrojne RP w procesie budowy narodowego potencjału odstraszania, red. M. Kubiński, Akademia Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 2015, s. 18.
[108] M. Kozub, Strategiczne środowisko bezpieczeństwa w pierwszych dekadach XXI wieku, Akademia Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 2009.

2.4. State security in the context of military threats

Issues related to national security encompass all spheres of human life and activity. This means that security is one of the most important values at both the individual and national levels, and the primary goal is the elimination of threats.[109] In the context of security studies, it is worth citing the view of Włodzimierz Fehler, who held that there are two fundamental strategies that are both highly anticipated and valued. One involves measures to prepare for protection against threats, while the other focuses on shaping the surrounding environment in a way that prevents such threats or minimizes the likelihood of their occurrence.[110]

Threats are categorized into two main groups—primary and secondary—with military threats falling into the first group. Additionally, the group of primary threats includes:

- natural hazards, such as those involving fire, water, air, or earth;
- technical hazards—transport-related, technological, and construction-related issues, as well as the illegal storage of hazardous materials;
- military threats—armed forces and terrorist attacks;
- severe environmental hazards, such as contamination of land, air, or water.

Among the contemporary military threats facing the state, one must include those originating from non-state actors that employ armed violence to pursue particular interests. Such military threats are often posed by extremist groups, religious organizations, or drug cartels. Threats arising in other spheres of life can trigger social, economic, or political conflicts.[111] A state's political security is closely linked to its military security. Whenever there is a justified need to employ military force, it is the result of political decisions. Armed violence constitutes a threat classified as political-military in nature. Military threats can stem from either military weakness—which may embolden a potential aggressor to resort to violence or a state's significant military potential.[112]

The collapse of the Eastern Bloc and the country's attainment of sovereignty brought about a shift in the security architecture on the geopolitical map and the emergence of new threats; the international situation changed, and a process of transforming the security

[109] Ciekanowski, Współczesne zagrożenia – terroryzm, [w:] Bezpieczeństwo regionalne gwarantem rozwoju zasobów ludzkich, red. naukowa T. Bąk, Z. Ciekanowski, Wydawnictwo PWSTE, Jarosław 2015, s. 91.
[110] W.Fehler, Zagrożenie-kluczowa kategoria teorii bezpieczeństwa [w:] Współczesne postrzeganie bezpieczeństwa, red. nauk. K.Jałoszyński, B.Wiśniewski, T.Wojtuszek, WSA, Bielsko-Biała 2007 ,s. 8.
[111] Z. Ciekanowski, Podstawy zarządzania bezpieczeństwem państwa, Wydawnictwo PWSTE, Jarosław 2019, s. 26-27.
[112] S. Sadowski, Bezpieczeństwo militarne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, [w:] Prawne i gospodarcze podstawy bezpieczeństwa, red. naukowa S. Kamosiński, T. Kuczur, J. Laskowska, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego, Bydgoszcz 2015, s. 126-127

environment began. Having regained its sovereignty, and seeking to bolster its security, Poland initiated talks with NATO nations regarding cooperation and membership in exchange for security guarantees. The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was signed in Paris on November 19, 1990,[113] and in 1995, Poland became the first former Warsaw Pact country to meet the imposed limits regarding troop numbers (234,000 soldiers) and armaments. Poland was admitted to NATO structures on March 12, 1999. Since then, the country has increased its engagement in the Alliance's missions, recognizing the importance of membership as a guarantee of political and military security.

Joining NATO was a significant strategic step, as the security guarantees obtained through the alliance made it possible to reduce troop numbers and, consequently, lower the military expenditures associated with building an independent military force. Over time, however, the geopolitical landscape began to shift. In the early 21st century, asymmetric threats stemming from terrorism—fueled in part by Islamic radicalism—began to intensify. Western European nations saw suicide bombings and attacks targeting civilians. The 2008 Russo-Georgian War demonstrated that the Russian Federation was reforming its military capabilities by restructuring its organization and modernizing its weaponry. As a NATO ally, Poland identified a growing military threat from Russia, which prompted a renewed focus and concerted efforts to enhance the country's military security.

When analyzing military threats, it is important to emphasize that the sources of such threats may lie either within or outside the state, contributing to the emergence of various types of crisis situations. In conducting this analysis, it is worth highlighting the characteristics that distinguish a military crisis from a non-military one. A military crisis poses a serious threat to the vital interests of the state and society, as well as to key values such as territorial integrity, sovereignty, undisturbed existence, unhindered development, and national independence. Every state strives to ensure an acceptable level of security and territorial integrity for its citizens. Strategic documents outline various methods for safeguarding national interests. The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland issued in 2007 focused solely on interests critical to state security, whereas the 2014 strategy emphasized the importance of democratic values and societal security. The current strategy from 2020 places significant emphasis on ensuring conditions for sustainable and stable development, preserving national identity, independence, and sovereignty, and actively shaping the international order.

[113] *Traktat o konwencjonalnych siłach zbrojnych w Europie. biurose.sejm.gov.pl. [zarchiwizowane z tego adresu (2015-10-23)].* (Kancelaria Sejmu, Biuro Studiów i Ekspertyz).

Regardless of the specific provisions within a security strategy, the fundamental goal of a comprehensive, integrated state security concept is, above all, to ensure the desired level of citizen security and to foster the conditions necessary to uphold territorial integrity.[114] Analyses of literature in the fields of military and security studies indicate that it is primarily states—as subjects of international law—that create military security threats through the use of force or blackmail based on the threat of using military force. However, non-state actors employing armed violence also seek to achieve their own objectives. Consequently, a threat to state security constitutes a military threat, understood as the potential or actual danger of armed violence directed against a nation's vital interests and core values.

Armed violence can be categorized as either direct or indirect—encompassing, for instance, acts of sabotage, provocations, military blackmail, displays of force, and border incidents. The emergence of military threats hinges on a political decision to employ military force, resulting in what are termed politico-military threats. It is a widely held view that a state's own military weakness—rather than the possession of significant military capabilities—acts as a catalyst for military violence. The role of defense policy is to counter and prevent all forms of potential violence. In the face of a military threat, the fundamental objective of the defense system is to maximize the chances of preserving the state's existence and to ensure the optimal continuation of its functions. Defense is not the exclusive responsibility of the armed forces; their mandate also includes mitigating the consequences of military action by leveraging all available tools, resources, and instruments.[115]

When analyzing the issue of military threats, it is worth asking why political decisions so often lead to such threats and whether an accumulated military capability can, in itself, constitute a primary source of danger. In certain regions of the world, the balance is disrupted by the excessive expansion of military forces. When a state possesses significant military power, it may be tempted to pursue its political objectives by leveraging that capability. Politicians play a key role in the buildup of excessive military power, which can, in turn, provoke decisions by irresponsible political leaders. Consequently, international policy places great emphasis on controlling the arms trade and preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction—tasks that rank among the most critical challenges facing the modern world. A military threat arises either when a state lacks the military capability necessary for its

[114] D. Majchrzak, Teoretyczne i praktyczne aspekty bezpieczeństwa militarnego Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej. Czynniki bezpieczeństwa militarnego Polski. Wojna w Ukrainie, kwartalnik Wiedza Obronna, Vol. 282 No. 1, Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Wiedzy Obronnej, Warszawa 2023, s. 9-10.

[115] Aspekty bezpieczeństwa militarnego w ujęciu Strategicznego Przeglądu Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, Kwartalnik Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe nr III-IV (23-24), BBN, Warszawa 2012, s. 39-40.

own defense or when it possesses excessive military power used to intimidate other states, thereby upsetting the balance of power and causing destabilization.[116]

The scale of the traditional military threat between East and West began to diminish, driven by factors such as the dissolution of the USSR and the reunification of Germany, as well as democratic processes unfolding in Europe—including the disbanding of the Warsaw Pact. Following these events, both the scale and the location of military threats shifted. These new circumstances led to a change in the significance and nature of military power.[117] The Russian Federation's return to great-power politics—exemplified by the war with Georgia and the Chechen conflict, as well as the reform of its armed forces—demonstrated that Russia was moving toward radical military actions and the expansion of its military capabilities. The 2012 Strategic National Security Review highlighted the need for Poland to prepare for new security challenges and threats posed by the Russian Federation. The Russian Federation's aggressive actions primarily include:

- provocative displays of force and military capability near the Polish border, aimed at provoking a military response from Poland;
- border incidents intended to trigger a military response;
- threats to use nuclear weapons deployed close to Poland's borders;
- the deployment of military units near Poland's land and maritime borders;
- violations of Polish airspace;
- shows of force through the conduct of military exercises near the border with Poland.

In 2012, a comprehensive assessment of Poland's security environment was conducted, and the need for the internationalization and coherence of security activities over the next twenty years was recommended.[118] Russia's armed attack on Ukraine on February 24, 2022, initiated a protracted, ongoing war between the two nations and poses a potential military threat to other countries in the region, including Poland. These aggressive actions by the Russian Federation have triggered a conventional arms race aimed at bolstering the defense capabilities of other nations—a trend extending beyond Europe to countries worldwide, including those in Asia. Russia's aggressive policy has set in motion a move away from neutrality for countries such as Finland and Sweden, which have declared their intention to join NATO. Ukraine is also interested in joining the Alliance; however, due to the ongoing war, the Alliance cannot grant

[116] D. J. Mierzejewski, Bezpieczeństwo europejskie ..., op. cit., s. 47-48.
[117] M. Paszkowski, Wyzwania militarne XXI wieku – kierunki zmian w środowisku bezpieczeństwa, [w:] Współczesne bezpieczeństwo militarne, red. naukowa M. Kubiak, A. Turek, Wydawnictwo UPH, Warszawa-Siedlce 2012, s. 16.
[118] Aspekty bezpieczeństwa militarnego w ujęciu ..., op. cit., s. 46.

its approval. Only after the war ends will the Alliance be able to consider admitting Ukraine to NATO.[119]

The anti-NATO stance of Russian Federation leader Vladimir Putin is noteworthy, as it implies that Russia is considering the possibility of a confrontation with NATO states. This serves as a very serious warning for Poland; consequently, voices are being raised to criticize the actions of our politicians in light of the looming danger. An alarming statement was made by the former commander of the Land Forces, General Waldemar Skrzypczak, on the "Newsroom WP" program: ″Politicians are acting exactly as Putin would want them to. What I am saying might upset many, but enough with these squabbles and secondary issues our security is truly under serious threat. We lack ammunition, tanks, infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), and soldiers; it turns out that beyond the propaganda of success, we have nothing and you cannot win a war with the propaganda of success." The general is convinced that the arms contracts currently being signed are far from sufficient to ensure Poland's security. Furthermore, he stated: "The threat from Russia continues to grow, and it is high time for the political landscape in Poland and across Europe to mobilize, consolidate, and make a concerted effort to build a capability that acts as a genuine—rather than merely declarative—deterrent, one that Putin would truly fear."[120]

The general's statement reflects a genuine concern for the quality of Poland's defense capabilities in light of the military threat posed by the Russian Federation. Only the true commitment of a united—and thus militarily strong—Europe can serve as a deterrent against the Russian Federation's aggressive stance, as it currently represents the greatest threat to our national security.`

[119] S. Ruszkiewicz, USA i Niemcy mówią „nie". „Praktycznie koniec dyskusji", 13 lipca 2023 r., Portal wiadomości.wp.pl, https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/niemcy-triumfuja-wola-dostarczac-bron- niz-widziec-szybko-ukraine-w-nato-6918861630237536a, [17.03.2024].

[120] A. Kopacz-Domańska, „Dość tych awantur". Generał gromi polityków, 13 stycznia 2025 r., Portal wiadomości.wp.pl, https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/general-apeluje-do-politykow-byc-moze-wielu-to-poruszy-7113808723687041v, [13.01.2025].

Chapter III

NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY – STATE SECURITY SYSTEM

3.1. National Security Strategy – definitions, functions, and models

When analyzing the scope and significance of national security, it becomes essential to conduct an in-depth analysis of the role and importance of the national security strategy and its impact on the scope of state security. In the case of Poland, it is precisely this document that details the challenges, tasks, and issues requiring resolution at both the state and societal levels. To begin with, it is worth presenting theoretical approaches to the concept of *strategy* according to various authors. R. Krupski defines strategy as a concept of an organization's functioning over a long-term horizon, encompassing operationalized main objectives as well as methods of action.[121] In general terms, strategy is a praxeological category defining the effective actions of any entity and relating to the most fundamental methods of such action. A security strategy is ***the theory and practice (science and art) of managing the security affairs of a given entity by the highest (supreme) decision-maker (whether an individual or a collective body), specifically encompassing the setting of security objectives and the determination of the means to achieve them***.[122] The term *strategy* derives from the Greek word *strategos*, referring to a supreme military commander responsible for preparing and conducting a war. Consequently, strategy was once equated exclusively with military matters and the methods of employing armed forces. It is worth noting that at the beginning of the 20th century, the concept of strategy was expanded to include "war strategy"—viewed as the method by which an entity (such as a state or coalition) employs all its available resources, both military and non-military, for the purposes of war. The term "defense strategy," meanwhile, emerged in the second half of the 20th century, denoting the manner in which an entity utilizes all its resources to prevent and resolve conflicts. The concepts of national and international security strategy emerged at the turn of the 21st century, referring to the methods used by entities states, coalitions, alliances, and the global international community to prevent and resolve tensions, crises, and conflicts of both a military and non-military nature.

[121] R. Krupski, Zarządzanie strategiczne. Koncepcje-metody, Wydawnictwo AE, Wrocław 2003, s. 14.
[122] S. Koziej, Wprowadzenie do teorii i historii bezpieczeństwa-skrypt internetowy (www.koziej.pl),

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate the differences between the essence of the national security strategy and the defense strategy.



Fig. 3. The essence of the national security (state security) strategy.

Source: S. Koziej, Wprowadzenie do teorii i historii bezpieczeństwa-skrypt internetowy (www.koziej.pl),



Fig. 4. The essence of the defense (military security) strategy

Source: S. Koziej, Wprowadzenie do teorii i historii bezpieczeństwa-skrypt internetowy (www.koziej.pl),

When considering the entity involved, various types of strategies can be distinguished, including individual and group strategies—such as corporate, national/state, international/regional, and global ones. Based on the entity's fields of activity, one can identify—among others—political, economic, social, security, and defense strategies. It is also worth noting the structure of a national strategy, which encompasses an overarching state strategy, territorial strategies (including those at the voivodeship, county, and municipality levels), and functional strategies (such as those specific to government departments or sectors). Key instruments of security strategy include public and non-public (as well as state and private) diplomacy; information capabilities—which may be public or non-public, overt or covert;

armed forces; and economic potential, comprising both state and non-state components. Achieving the goals set out in a strategy requires not only commitment but also the availability of specific financial capacity and material and intangible resources. Every strategy addresses key areas of human activity—namely, goals and the methods for achieving them. A mission defines not only the intended strategic goal but also the means of attaining it.[123]A strategy should encompass not only the mission and an assessment of the feasibility of its implementation but also operational goals and concrete action guidelines. It is also important to evaluate the effectiveness of achieving the strategy's objectives.

According to Tilles, the quality of a strategy can be assessed based on:

- time horizon;
- risk level;
- internal consistency and coherence;
- alignment of the strategy with available resources.[124]

The mission, the assessment of capabilities, as well as the prevailing conditions and defined strategic goals, constitute the core elements of the strategy.

1) **deterrence model** – based on military strength and established alliances to deter a potential aggressor;

2) **total defense model** – developed with the involvement of the entire society and all state structures;

3) **cooperative security model** – based on international cooperation and the establishment of joint organizations;

4) resilience model – based on survival and the rapid restoration of essential functions following the elimination of a threat.[125]

Various approaches to defining strategy exist in the literature. J. von Neumann and O. Morgenstern view strategy as a comprehensive plan that encompasses objectives and specifies the decisions to be made in a given situation; according to C. von Clausewitz, a strategy—such as a war plan—includes an outline of specific military campaigns and the individual actions undertaken within them; and A.D. Chandler defines strategy as the determination of a company's long-term goals, the adoption of specific courses of action, and the allocation of resources necessary to achieve those goals.[126] In a general sense, strategy

[123] J. Prońko, Istota strategii [w:] Teoretyczne aspekty strategii bezpieczeństwa państwa, red. nauk. A. Szerauc, Płock 2010, s. 87
[124] A. K. Koźmiński, W. Piotrowski, Zarządzanie. Teoria i Praktyka, PWN, Warszawa 2002,s. 189.
[125] https://www.gov.pl/Strategia_Bezpiecze%C5%84stwa_Narodowego_Rzeczypospolitej_Polskiej
[126] Za A. Wajda, Organizacja i zarządzanie, PWE, Warszawa 2003, s. 54.

entails defining the effective actions to be taken by each entity encompassed by that strategy. According to Stanisław Koziej, a security strategy encompasses both theory and practicerepresenting both the science and the art of managing the security affairs of a given entity by a principal decision-maker (whether an individual or a collective) with the aim of establishing security objectives and the methods for achieving them.[127] According to Stanisław Koziej, the typology of security strategies encompasses:

- concepts regarding prevention and response;
- significance—not only in a declarative sense but, above all, in real and theoretical terms;
- the development of confrontation procedures—that is, successive and sequential actions;
- the identification of methods to defeat an adversary in combat, exhaust them, and ultimately eliminate them;
- the determination of means and targets of influence aimed at deterring a potential aggressor and preventing a possible attack;
- the specification of spheres of activity and strategic instruments, including diplomatic, economic, informational, and military policies, among others;
- the definition of territorial scope and the designation of a specific area;

The National Security Strategy is, therefore, an official document defining the planning process.[128] It encompasses not only goals and principles but also the methods for utilizing the country's resources to protect against threats and ensure stable development. Shaping security is the task of the strategy and is implemented through it. The essential characteristics and functions of the strategy can be described as follows:

1) it constitutes a well-considered plan of action for state authorities;

2) it serves to protect sovereignty, territory, and citizens;

3) it aligns political objectives with available resources, such as military, economic, or social assets. Key functions of the strategy:

1) protective – safeguarding the state against external attacks and internal crises;

2) preventive – involving the early detection and neutralization of potential threats;

3) coordinating – based on integrating actions taken by various institutions into a coherent system;

[127] S. Koziej, Wprowadzenie do teorii i historii bezpieczeństwa-skrypt internetowy (www.koziej.pl), Warszawa 2010, s. 4

[128] https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/strategia-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego-rzeczypospolitej-polskiej

4) developmental – fostering secure conditions for economic and social growth.[129]

Stanisław Koziej holds the view that one of the most important features of a strategy consists of its principles—specifically operational ones—which are historically evolved rules for the effective preparation and conduct of combat. These principles increase the chances of achieving victory while minimizing losses. The essence of applying these strategic principles lies in maintaining and leveraging both quantitative and qualitative advantages.

The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland reflects the commitment to ensuring the security of the Republic of Poland. The Strategy identifies national interests and formulates strategic objectives based on the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. It is aligned with the strategies of allied nations, including NATO's Strategic Concept and the European Security Strategy. Once approved by the President of the Republic of Poland, this document serves as the basis for developing implementing acts and strategic directives, such as the Political-Strategic Defence Directive of the Republic of Poland. Furthermore, this document underpins the preparation of strategies for specific areas of national security, strategic plans for defence response and crisis management, and multi-year programmes for transforming the state security system—including programmes for non-military defence preparations and the development of the armed forces.[130] It is also important to emphasize the significance of the White Paper on the National Security of the Republic of Poland, which defines the national security (state security) strategy; this document outlines the concept for ensuring security by identifying national interests and strategic objectives. Furthermore, it contains forecasts regarding the future evolution of the strategic security environment, as well as methods for achieving strategic goals.[131] The analyses conducted clearly indicate that the level of state and national security is significantly influenced by a range of actions that form a rather complex system.[132]

3.2. The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland and its significance within the state security system

On May 12, 2020, the President of the Republic of Poland signed an order approving the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland. In his address, the President assured that the document addresses all issues related to national security. The previous National

[129] https://stara.wsge.edu.pl/pl/11pub04caly.pdf
[130] *Tamże*, s. 3.
[131] Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, BBN, Warszawa 2013, s. 249.
[132] J. Kaczmarek, A.Skowroński, *Bezpieczeństwo. Świat-Europa-Polska*, Alta 2, Wrocław 1998, s. 5.

Security Strategy dated back to December 2014. The National Security Strategy is a document issued pursuant to Article 4a, paragraph 1, point 1 of the Act of November 21, 1967, on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland (data from the Ministry of National Defence). The document outlines the fundamental interests and objectives of the Polish state regarding national security. The security concept presents an approach to the issue of threats that extends beyond purely military ones. It aligns with the objectives of NATO and the European Union, as well as with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. The specific dimensions of national security addressed include external, military, internal, civic, social, economic, environmental, information, and telecommunications security. The document emphasizes strengthening the sense of national identity among Poles while fostering equal integration.

The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland[133] indicates that the contemporary security environment is becoming increasingly complex and uncertain. Political, military, economic, and social interactions are undergoing dynamic changes at national, regional, and global levels. According to the Strategy's authors, this significantly impacts both security-related activities and the primary directions for transforming the national security system. Developing and implementing the new National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland addresses the need to ensure the state's capacity to counter threats and meet challenges arising from the changing security landscape. The document also envisions seizing opportunities to enhance the security of the state and its citizens, ensure continued development, and strengthen the Republic of Poland's position on the international stage.[134]

The new Strategy also defines national interests in the realm of national security, which include:

- safeguarding independence, territorial integrity, and sovereignty, as well as ensuring the security of the state and its citizens;
- shaping an international order based on solidarity-based cooperation and respect for international law, providing guarantees for Poland's secure development;
- strengthening national identity and safeguarding national heritage;
- ensuring conditions for lasting and sustainable social and economic development, as well as protecting the natural environment.[135]

[133] https://www.gov.pl/web/kgpsp/nowa-strategia-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego-podpisana-przez-prezydenta-rp, data dostępu 30.05.2021.
[134] *Tamże.*
[135] *Tamże.*

The identified and defined interests are intended to form the pillars of Poland's national security. Thus, it can be considered that they define, to a certain extent, the scope of state security. Their realization is to be achieved through the use of appropriate forces, resources, and capabilities. All of this is to constitute a mechanism for strategic-level actions.

The first pillar of security concerns the safety of the state and its citizens. It encompasses the strategic objective of national security management, with guidelines to be set out in the Act on National Security Management. Broadly speaking, national security management is to be achieved through the integration of security management processes, involving the direction of state defense and the development of adaptive capabilities. The second strategic objective within this pillar is state resilience and universal defense. Achieving this objective entails enhancing the state's resilience to threats by establishing a universal defense system based on a whole-of-nation effort, as well as fostering an understanding of the need to develop the resilience and defense capabilities of the Republic of Poland. The first pillar also encompasses matters concerning the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. A primary task for state authorities in this regard is to strengthen the operational capabilities of the Armed Forces to deter and defend against security threats, with a particular focus on enhancing mobility and technical modernization. The Strategy's guidelines also address the domain of cyberspace. Cybersecurity efforts in this area are to focus on increasing resilience against cyber threats and improving information protection across the public, military, and private sectors, as well as promoting knowledge and best practices that enable citizens to better protect their information.[136] Safe functioning within the information space is also to be ensured for both the state and its citizens.[137]

The second pillar defines Poland's position within the international security system. The first objective under this pillar is to strengthen the capacity of the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union to ensure the security of Poland and the entire Euro-Atlantic area; the second is to develop cooperation—at bilateral, regional, and global levels—aimed at reinforcing Poland's position as a key element of the international security system.[138] The third pillar focuses on issues related to national identity and heritage. The primary objectives in this regard are to strengthen national identity—rooted in Christian heritage and universal values—and to enhance the positive image of the Republic of Poland, as well as its cultural and economic

[136] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej: bezpieczeństwo państwa i obywateli, https://www.cb.szczecin.pl/blog-post/strategia-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego-rzeczypospolitej-polskiej-bezpieczenstwo-panstwa-i-obywateli/, (dostęp 30.05.2021).
[137] *Tamże.*
[138] *Tamże.*

appeal. The fourth pillar concerns social and economic development as well as environmental protection. Within this pillar, commitments were made regarding health and family protection—specifically, improving conditions for the protection and development of the family and enhancing citizens' health security. Regarding migration policy, the strategy calls for coordinating migration policy with economic, social, and security policies. It also highlights the need to strengthen economic and financial security—for instance, by supporting measures that increase resilience to international financial crises, particularly by bolstering the stability of public finances while ensuring conditions for stable and sustainable economic growth. Furthermore, the strategy under this pillar aims to ensure national energy security—based on traditional energy sources—by creating conditions for the development of alternatives, expanding and modernizing generation capacities as well as electricity transmission and distribution networks to guarantee supply continuity (including the prevention of unexpected outages), and developing distributed electricity sources in a sustainable manner, while adapting the National Power System to the operational characteristics of these sources. The environmental security strategy highlights the necessity of complying with and enforcing environmental protection regulations. A key aspect of this pillar is emphasizing the role of scientific and technological capital by leveraging it for the country's economic development.[139]

Poland's new security strategy outlines—within four pillars—the scope of national security activities deemed by its authors to be crucial for the proper functioning of the state and society. It is worth highlighting that the Strategy defines specific strategic objectives and enumerates the primary mechanisms (albeit in general terms) for their implementation. The entities responsible for executing these provisions include ministers heading government administration departments, heads of central government agencies, provincial governors (voivodes), local government bodies, and other entities with competencies in the realm of national security. The document mandates that these entities take national interests and strategic national security objectives into account in all planned undertakings and ongoing operations. Poland's National Security Strategy also provides for not only the review of tasks already performed but also their updating in light of the state's evolving security environment. This form of oversight is intended to take place through strategic national security reviews.[140]

[139] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego.

[140] R. Zaniewski, *Nowa Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego*, https://fundacjarepublikanska.org/nowa-strategia-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego/, (dostęp 04.06.2021).

An analysis of the values, interests, and needs associated with national security—as well as its categorization based on criteria established by researchers and Poland's National Security Strategy—leads to the conclusion that the scope of national security primarily encompasses areas of fundamental importance to the development and effective functioning of the state as an institution, a nation, and a society. As the National Security Strategy indicates, it is precisely the areas concerning state and citizen security, international relations, national identity and heritage, and social development that define the tasks and initiatives aimed at enhancing citizens' sense of security and strengthening the security of the state.

Conducting a defensive operation is not merely a matter for the Armed Forces; it is a task for the entire state. Naturally, the role of the Armed Forces is decisive once armed aggression begins. However, for a military operation to be effective, the state's entire defense system must undertake preemptive measures. Such actions can only be carried out based on a coherent legal framework—including pre-established and practiced operational procedures since there would be no time to develop them during a political-military crisis or wartime, when the international situation demands rapid decision-making and action. According to W. Pokruszyński, the international situation is more complex than the capacity to systematize its manifestations and developments, particularly in unpredictable circumstances. The international order is undergoing constant evolution.[141] The legal framework should therefore play an increasingly important role as a stabilizing factor. Inadequate or ambiguous legal provisions can effectively destabilize both the preparations for a defensive operation and its actual conduct, creating jurisdictional chaos and decision-making paralysis. In this context, a flawed legal framework works to the adversary's advantage and can be just as dangerous as their army. A lack of clear legal provisions means that operational methodologies and strategies may be interpreted and adopted in inconsistent ways at the executive level. This applies, among other things, to the National Security Strategy. The National Security Strategy should be adopted following a Strategic National Security Review at the beginning of the strategic cycle. It should serve as the basis for various key strategic security decisions, such as amendments to the Political-Strategic Defense Directive, the establishment of the Main Directions for the Development of the Armed Forces and their long-term development program, changes to the Armed Forces' command and control system, and the creation of new branches of the Armed Forces. The strategy should reflect the logic of a four-stage strategic cycle, comprising:

[141] W. Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo…, op. cit., s. 20.

1. Identification of national interests as the starting point for further analysis.
2. Assessment and forecasting of the security environment (to determine what may hinder or facilitate the pursuit of these interests).
3. Definition of the operational strategy—that is, the methods for ensuring the realization of national interests within the specific conditions of the security environment.
4. Definition of the preparatory strategy—that is, the methods for preparing one's own security system to carry out the aforementioned operational tasks.

S. Koziej is of the opinion that, in this context, the strategy constitutes a proper basis for developing (updating) the Political-Strategic Defence Directive.[142] Conversely, the absence of legal regulations and an appropriate organizational structure for the governing body in this area means that the management of national security is essentially governed by inconsistent laws, while the management structure itself is uncoordinated and irrational. There is a lack of essential foundational elements—particularly at the central level—as well as statutes providing detailed regulation of specific security domains, i.e., all categories of national security. Vague legal norms have resulted in the absence of a rational security system and have given rise to inconsistencies among the system's various components.[143] According to Waldemar Kitler, the concept of national security has gradually evolved over the last few decades, reflecting a broader understanding of the measures taken to protect and defend society—along with its assets and environment—and the state itself as a political, territorial, coercive, and social institution. Modern technologies, artificial intelligence, and the use of cultural factors, literature, mass media, film, and other non-military means enable non-kinetic attacks and forms of coercion. These manifest as restrictions, the disruption of financial markets and the economy, surveillance and corruption, the extortion of concessions, espionage, the blocking of command-and-control systems for decision-making processes, cyberattacks, the facilitation of illegal migration, power struggles, and the manipulation of public opinion and social sentiment.

The consequences of these actions affect the state's external and—above all—internal activities, its legal order, national existence and development, human life and health, material assets, the natural environment, and the economic sphere; consequently, they impact political, military, economic, social, cultural, ecological, public, general, information, and cybersecurity.

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[142] S. Koziej, *Braki Strategii Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego 2020: bez koncepcji operacyjnej i priorytetów preparacyjnych*, Fundacja im. Kazimierza Pułaskiego, 26 maja 2020 r., https:// pulaski.pl/pulaski-policy-paper-s-koziej-braki-strategii-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego-2020-bez-koncepcji-operacyjnej-i-priorytetow preparacyjnych/ (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).
[143] W. Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo, op. cit., s. 86.

For these and many other reasons, conceptualizing national security—including its internal aspects—cannot simply be a matter of replicating historical experiences. Defining internal security merely as a sphere of state activity focused on ensuring an undisturbed constitutional order, public safety (or public order), and the safety of individuals (their lives and health) is decidedly insufficient given the contemporary nature of national security.[144]

It is worth emphasizing that the 2014 National Security Strategy was adopted following a Strategic National Security Review conducted at the beginning of the strategic cycle and reflected the logic of a four-stage strategic cycle. The 2014 National Security Strategy stated that it was necessary to improve procedures for planning, organizing, coordinating, and supervising the security sphere, thereby ensuring coherence between national security management and the national development management system. This necessity stems from the inseparability and interdependence of development and security, as well as the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to security. It was also noted that ensuring coherence between crisis management and defense responses is crucial; this is to be achieved by identifying common areas addressed in crisis management plans and operational plans at all levels. Efforts should be made to introduce a single planning document at all levels of public administration that encompasses defense, crisis management, and civil defense matters. Implementing new solutions to integrate national security management may require legislative changes to precisely define the roles of state authorities and institutions within the national security system, the tools at their disposal, and the principles governing the coordination of activities.[145]

The 2014 annexation of Crimea—characterized by unconventional methods of aggression and actions unlawful under international law—along with Russia's ongoing military operations in Ukraine, have underscored the urgent need to modify the existing legal order. This includes developing regulations that adequately address new threats as well as novel forms and methods of hostile action. According to W. Pokruszyński, applying the norms of international law is the proper path to ensuring state security, even though there are numerous global events for which international law offers no unequivocal answer. The current legal framework fails to clarify the legal and political consequences for organizations and states that

[144] W. Kitler, *Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne w świetle współczesnych wyzwań teorii i praktyki problemu*, „Wiedza Obronna" 2023, t. 282, nr 1, s. 120–121, 123.
[145] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 2014 r., s. 44; https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/SBN%20RP.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

unilaterally arrogate to themselves the right to exercise self-defense beyond their own borders or to launch preemptive strikes against alleged aggressors.[146]

The adoption of the 2020 National Security Strategy[147] **was not preceded by a Strategic National Security Review**, but rather by recommendations for the Strategy's development—a process later given legal sanction under the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland (Art. 24, para. 1, point 1). The failure to conduct the Review met with disapproval and widespread criticism. Stanisław Koziej holds the view that adopting the Strategy without a broader debate involving independent, non-governmental experts and representatives of various political forces constitutes a strategic error.[148] The 2020 National Security Strategy differed in structure from the 2014 version; its operational section is essentially a strategy for preparedness. It highlights the need for systemic changes in the realm of national security—including improvements to national security management (aligned with contemporary challenges and threats)—by, among other things, integrating various fragmented solutions that previously operated in isolation.[149]

The strategy identifies a need to review and establish a hierarchy and interdependencies among strategic and planning documents—as well as their implementation mechanisms covering national security, state defense, and the country's socio-economic development. Furthermore, within the framework of a comprehensive and integrated national security system, it mandates coherence between civil and defense planning across all levels of government (central and local) and allows for the selective execution of tasks based on specific needs. A dedicated act on national security management was to be drafted to facilitate the implementation of these measures.[150] Due to the absence of a legal basis requiring the premises adopted in the Strategy to be mandatorily incorporated into other strategic government documents, the Strategy expresses the expectation that the content of the National Security Strategy (SBN) should be further elaborated and reflected in national strategic documents concerning national security and Poland's development. In March 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence submitted a letter to the President of the Republic of Poland regarding the issuance of recommendations for a new National Security Strategy,

[146] W. Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo, op. cit., s. 54.
[147] 12 maja 2020 r. Prezydent RP zatwierdził nową Strategię Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego RP, która zastąpiła strategię z 2014 r.. Por.: Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 2020 r., https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/Strategia_Bezpieczenstwa_Narodowego_RP_2020.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).
[148] Braki Strategii Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego…, op. cit.
[149] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 2020 r., op. cit., s. 9.
[150] *ibidem*, s. 14.

pursuant to Article 24(1)(1) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland.[151] **The development of the recommendations was not preceded by a Strategic National Security Review.** Recommendations for the new Strategy were submitted by the President of the Republic of Poland to the Prime Minister in July 2024, based solely on expert analyses.[152] The initiation of work on the new Strategy was not preceded by a Strategic National Security Review or a Strategic Defence Review. Nor were the exercises referred to in Article 24, paragraph 1, point 5 of the Act on the Defence of the Homeland conducted. Under this provision, the President of the Republic of Poland—upon the motion of the Prime Minister approves plans for national defence system exercises (organized cyclically at least every four years with the participation of the highest state authorities) and directs their conduct. From the perspective of established planning practice, this has created a challenging situation. The issuance of the new PSDO (pursuant to the November 2024 request) should trigger the process of developing new plans for the employment of the Armed Forces and the Defence Response Plan of the Republic of Poland (PRORP). The PRORP presents a particular issue, as in practice it initiates a very long planning cycle regarding operational planning within the administration (approximately 28 months).[153] Work on the new strategy (pursuant to the December 2024 directive) may take approximately one year. This process should result in the issuance of a subsequent PSDO, new plans for the employment of the Armed Forces, and a new PRORP. Given the time required to draft these documents, planning cycles within the administrative sphere of operational planning will overlap in 2026. This will necessitate non-standard measures by the Ministry of National Defence's Department of Strategy and Defence Planning to prevent the duplication of efforts or—worse—the execution of tasks at lower levels of authority (e.g., local government) that conflict with new initiatives being implemented at the ministerial or provincial governor level.

The conditions under analysis stem from the absence of legal provisions defining the interdependence of these documents, mandating a Strategic National Security Review prior to formulating recommendations for the National Security Strategy, or regulating the interrelationships between strategic documents. Article 24, paragraph 1, point 4 of the Act on the Defense of the Homeland establishes that the Political-Strategic Defense Directive of the Republic of Poland (PSDO) is issued by the President of the Republic of Poland—upon

[151] Pismo nr DSiPO-WS.0300.1.2024 z dnia 1 marca 2024 r.
[152] ismo nr 548/BBN/24 z dnia 4 lipca 2024 r.
[153] Zob. uwagi do dalszej części artykułu „Podjęcie próby hierarchizacji oraz ustalenia wzajemnej zależności dokumentów o charakterze strategicznym w obszarze bezpieczeństwa narodowego"

the motion of the Prime Minister and by way of an order—as an implementing document for the National Security Strategy. There is no legal link (whether statutory or at the level of executive regulations) establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between the PSDO and the plans for the employment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland—plans referred to in Article 25, paragraph 1, point 2a of the Act on the Defense of the Homeland, and linked to the President's authority under Article 136 of the Constitution to order general or partial mobilization and the use of the Armed Forces for the defense of the state upon the Prime Minister's motion. A logical connection between the PSDO and the plans for the employment of the Armed Forces is derived instead from legal practice and academic analysis. This connection is expressed in the assessment that plans for the employment of the Armed Forces should be grounded in the political premises adopted in the PSDO and developed for the planning scenarios defined therein.

Pursuant to Article 87(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the sources of universally binding law in the Republic of Poland are: the Constitution, statutes, ratified international agreements, and regulations. Article 91(2) of the Constitution establishes that an international agreement ratified with prior consent expressed in a statute takes precedence over that statute if the statute cannot be reconciled with the agreement. Consequently, instructions, decisions, or internal orders issued by the Ministry of National Defence cannot impose upon constitutional state bodies an obligation to adopt specific scientific or doctrinal approaches regarding the relationship between the PSDO and plans for the employment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. Such approaches may in no way restrict the competence of these bodies to apply applicable law concerning the development of national plans for the employment of the Armed Forces, as referred to in Article 25(1)(2a) of the Act on the Defence of the Homeland. The principle of legality enshrined in Article 7 of the Constitution obliges state bodies to act in accordance with applicable provisions governing their competence interpreted strictly and rejecting the principle that whatever is not prohibited is permitted. In accordance with the established case law of the Constitutional Tribunal, where legal provisions do not expressly provide for a specific competence of a state authority, such competence may not be presumed; nor may an intention not expressed by the legislature be attributed to it on the basis of a competence of a different nature. Legal provisions do not mandate the signing of a PUSZ based on a PSDO; such action is merely a matter of good practice. Given the absence of generally applicable regulations governing the scope of the PSDO, there is no legal obligation to delay the drafting and approval of a PUSZ simply because

circumstances limit the ability to draft and sign a new PSDO. Under the current legal framework, ensuring internal consistency—necessitated by legal, operational, and international changes—constitutes a sufficient legal basis for signing a PUSZ. This approach does not, of course, preclude work on drafting the PSDO after the PUSZ has been signed, provided that the substantive consistency between the two documents is maintained.

In light of the aforementioned dilemmas, legal solutions were developed at the National Security Bureau (BBN) at the turn of 2023 and 2024 to regulate the hierarchy and interdependence of strategic documents in the field of national security.

3.3. Strategic defense planning in light of legal acts

An analysis of legal acts reveals a gap in current legislation: there is no provision authorizing any authority to raise the combat readiness of specific military units during peacetime without declaring a state of war or altering the overall combat readiness status of the Polish Armed Forces. Under Article 10(2)(2) of the Act of 29 August 2002 on the State of War and the Competencies of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and the Principles of His Subordination to the Constitutional Bodies of the Republic of Poland, the President of the Republic of Poland—during a state of war and upon the motion of the Council of Ministers—decides, among other matters, on the combat readiness status of the Polish Armed Forces. No other regulations address the raising of combat readiness for selected military units during peacetime (i.e., during the state of the state's permanent defense readiness). Naturally, there must be a mechanism in peacetime to gradually increase the combat readiness of individual units (rather than the entire Armed Forces). Authority in this regard can be derived for the Minister of National Defence from Article 134 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which stipulates that during peacetime, the President exercises supreme command over the Armed Forces through the Minister of National Defence. A second source is Article 2(1) of the Act of 14 December 1995 on the Office of the Minister of National Defence, which assigns the Minister responsibility for directing the entirety of the Armed Forces' activities (including operational ones) during peacetime. However, this matter requires further statutory regulation. In 2004, a number of implementing acts were issued pursuant to Article 6(2) of the Act of 21 November 1967 on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland.[154]

A shortcoming of the legal framework at the time was that defense planning—including operational planning and defense programming—was regulated by legal acts at the level

[154] Tj. Dz. U. z 2021 r. poz. 372 ze zm. Ustawa została uchylona z dniem 23 kwietnia 2022 r.

of a regulation.[155] Furthermore, the implementing acts associated with the Act on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland suffered from numerous legislative flaws. The statutory authorizations for ten implementing acts—specifically, Council of Ministers regulations issued pursuant to Article 6(2) of the Act—lacked guidelines, thereby failing to meet the requirements of Article 92(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. These statutory authorizations were "blanket" in nature, as they lacked the substantive provisions (e.g., regarding the national security management system) whose content should have been specified in the regulations issued under such authorization. Such a blanket nature of provisions is inconsistent with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (see, e.g., the Constitutional Tribunal judgment of June 28, 2000, case K 25/99, or the judgment of February 23, 2010, case K 1/08). Additionally, all ten Council of Ministers regulations contained provisions dealing with matters reserved for statutory regulation (such as the types of defense readiness states and the conditions for their implementation), which also conflicts with the Constitution of the Republic of Poland (see, e.g., the Constitutional Tribunal judgment of February 22, 2010, case P 16/09).[156]

Doubts regarding the application of the law that have arisen over the years require statutory regulation, as they concern the powers of state authorities and—in terms of their consequences—affect business entities and citizens (in the event of a military operation). It is not possible to address these identified systemic issues through regulations issued by the Council of Ministers or the Minister of National Defence, or through lower-ranking legal acts. Pursuant to Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, public authorities act on the basis of and within the limits of the law. In a ruling issued by a panel of seven judges on January 18, 2005 (case file no. WK 22/04), the Supreme Court stated that Article 7 of the Constitution embodies a rule prohibiting the presumption of authority; consequently, it mandates that all actions taken by a public authority be grounded in an explicitly defined legal basis for that authority. The Constitutional Tribunal has also addressed the principle of the rule of law. According to the Tribunal's jurisprudence, a regulation may not supplement a statute, expand upon the prerequisites for implementing a legal norm defined in the statute, or introduce procedural elements that are inconsistent with the statute's underlying premises. Modifying or

[155] Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 15 czerwca 2004 r. w sprawie warunków i trybu planowania i finansowania zadań wykonywanych w ramach przygotowań obronnych państwa przez organy administracji rządowej i organy samorządu terytorialnego (Dz. U. z 2020 r. poz. 1911 ze zm.); rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 27 kwietnia 2004 r. w sprawie przygotowania systemu kierowania bezpieczeństwem narodowym (Dz. U. z 2004 r. nr 98, poz. 978 ze zm.); rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 21 września 2004 r. w sprawie gotowości obronnej państwa (Dz. U. z 2004 r. nr 219, poz. 2218.).

[156] L. Bełza, D. Ćwik, Dylematy…, op. cit., s. 113. Ustawa o obronie Ojczyzny nie wyeliminowała szeregu wskazanych wątpliwości legislacyjnych.

supplementing a statute via regulation cannot be justified merely by the fact that the authorizing provision contains the phrase "specifies the detailed principles and procedure." Furthermore, the body issuing an implementing act cannot claim that issuing a regulation with specific content was purposeful or rational if the enabling provision did not grant the authority to regulate the specific matters in question (judgment of February 22, 2010, case no. P 16/09).

The Supreme Audit Office (NIK) highlighted legal shortcomings regarding defense matters in audit reports submitted to, among others, the Sejm, the Senate, and executive authorities. These audits specifically covered areas such as:

- the withdrawal of surplus weaponry and military equipment from the Armed Forces and their subsequent management;[157] this included an analysis of the demand for munitions for a potential defensive operation;
- the implementation of selected operational programs within the modernization of the Polish Armed Forces,[158] including an analysis of the achievement of operational capabilities against established timelines;
- the preparation and implementation of the Economy Mobilization Program for 2013–2022; this involved assessing the production capacity of the defense industry against adopted planning assumptions;
- state defense preparations within Poland's national security system, including an analysis of the Political-Strategic Defense Directive and the feasibility of the Polish Defense Response Plan in the context of NATO's Crisis Response System assumptions;
- the achievement of mobilization and combat readiness by the Armed Forces to execute wartime tasks;[159] this included an assessment of the Armed Forces' preparedness for wartime operations. Legal shortcomings were identified during exercises—including those addressing hybrid threats and sub-threshold activities (below the threshold of war)—concerning not only Poland but also other European Union countries.[160]

In response to the escalating security risks in the region, the National Security Bureau—following months of preparation—conducted the largest high-level Tabletop Exercise (TTX) since 1989 in January and May 2023. Participants included the President of the Republic of Poland, the Prime Minister, the Speakers of the Sejm and Senate, the heads of the Ministries of National Defence, Foreign Affairs, and the Interior and Administration, as well as the heads

[157] Informacja o wynikach kontroli z 18 kwietnia 2014 r. (kontrola nr P13/086).
[158] Informacja o wynikach kontroli z 31 stycznia 2017 r. (kontrola nr P15/040).
[159] Informacja o wynikach kontroli z 7 października 2022 r. (kontrola nr P21/037).
[160] Były to ćwiczenia cykliczne CMX oraz ZIMA.

of special services and top military commanders. The exercise demonstrated that current security conditions—particularly the intensification of hybrid activities directed against Poland below the threshold of war—necessitate the adjustment and precise definition of the responsibilities held by state defense management bodies, as well as the systematization and detailed clarification of their interdependencies and areas of cooperation. Practical conclusions drawn from the exercise highlighted, among other things, the need to optimize the processes for developing, approving, and updating key operational planning and defense programming documents.

Former soldiers of the Armed Forces have drawn attention to the legal, decision-making, and organisational problems affecting the state security system. “The state security system is in disarray,” assessed General Mieczysław Gocuł, former Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, in an interview with *Polityka*. In November 2017, already as a retired military officer, he wrote a letter on the matter to President Andrzej Duda. He also shared his concerns in the media. Among other issues, he pointed to the lack of strategic documents. “There is no security system because there is no national security management system,” he stated. “I am concerned that the Political and Strategic Defence Directive, to which most of the funds amounting to 2% of GDP are allocated, is adopted more on the basis of intuition than awareness. Its issuance should be preceded by a strategic defence exercise, after which the President either approves the directive or revises it. (…) Soldiers are sometimes not even aware why they are assigned to the first echelon in a given year and to the reserve at another time, but they train in accordance with the plans. We know why they train in this way. But if the plans have not been adopted, the question arises: what is the military being trained for?”[161] The former Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces asked whether we currently possess the capability to mobilize our Armed Forces.[162] "We have significantly fewer reservists than Ukraine. (...)"

[161] M. Świerczyński, *Gen. Mieczysław Gocuł o dramatycznym stanie polskiej armii, Polityka*, 10 lipca 2018 r., https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/kraj/1755560,1,gen-mie-czyslaw-gocul-o-dramatycznym-stanie-polskiej-armii.read (dostęp: 9 maja 2025 r.). Zob. też: „Mnie już brakowało twarzy, żeby wytrzymać wstyd, jaki przynosili moi przełożeni za granicą”, TVN24, 12 lipca 2018 r., https://tvn24.pl/polska/general-mieczyslaw-gocul-o-sys-
temie-obronnym-polski-ra853216–2322588 (dostęp: 9 maja 2025 r.).

[162] Ł. Maziewski, Generał stracił cierpliwość: Nie jesteśmy w stanie wysłać na granicę pełnej brygady, O2, 1 września 2023 r., https://www.o2.pl/informacje/general-stracil-cier-pliwosc-nie-jestesmy-w-stanie-wyslac-na-granice-pelnej-brygady-6936869315603072a (dostęp: 9 maja 2025 r.)

In recent years, the training of personnel reserves was abandoned—a definite mistake according to General Gocuł—which became evident during the conflict between Russia and Ukraine.[163] To address the aforementioned dilemmas regarding operational planning informed by exercise results, findings from Supreme Audit Office (NIK) inspections, and the views of the academic community and military practitioners—the President of the Republic of Poland launched a legislative initiative in mid-August 2023. He submitted a draft act to the Speaker of the Sejm concerning the actions of state authorities in the event of an external threat to national security.[164] Due to the parliamentary elections in the autumn of 2023 and the principle of legislative discontinuity, the President of the Republic of Poland resubmitted the bill to the Speaker of the Sejm in early May 2024.[165] The key areas addressed by the presidential bill are to include:

- the principles and organization of the state security management system. The proposed changes aim to ensure, among other things, an effective response to emerging threats. The draft act defines the principles of state security management—including the direction of national defense—carried out by public authorities in conjunction with the command bodies of the Polish Armed Forces, as well as the Speaker of the Sejm and the Speaker of the Senate;
- the establishment of state defense readiness levels and the specification of key actions to be taken under these levels (activating defense system components appropriate to the specific threat);
- the refinement of the "permanent duty" system components. In addition to government and local government administration bodies, the permanent duty system includes: the President of the Republic of Poland—for the purpose of exchanging information and decisions between the President and the Speaker of the Sejm, the Speaker of the Senate, the Prime Minister, and ministers; and the Speaker of the Sejm—for the purpose of exchanging information and decisions between the Speaker of the Sejm and the President, the Speaker of the Senate, and the Prime Minister; the definition of the purpose and structure of the Political-Strategic Defense Directive, the procedure

[163] M. Tejchman, Gen. Gocuł: W ostatnich latach zaniechano szkolenia rezerwistów. To był zdecydowany błąd, RMF24, 18 marca 2022 r., https://www.rmf24.pl/tylko-w-rmf24/ popoludniowa-rozmowa/news-gen-gocul-w-ostatnich-latach-zaniechano-szkolenia-rezer- wisto,nId,5901697#crp_state=1 (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.

[164] Pismo Prezydenta RP do Marszałka Sejmu z dnia 16 sierpnia 2023 r., Druk sejmowy nr 3605, https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druki9ka.nsf/0/5EAAC2B2F08D58A1C1258A0E003075 37/%24File/3605.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

[165] Pismo Prezydenta RP do Marszałka Sejmu RP z dnia 2 maja 2024 r., Druk sejmowy nr 405, https://orka.sejm.gov.pl/Druki10ka.nsf/0/1DB023BEE0BD252BC1258B240056FD2C/ %24File/405.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025.

for its drafting, issuance, and amendment, as well as the bodies authorized to make specific decisions. These are crucial matters for the proper execution of tasks outlined in the Polish Defense Response Plan and in national plans for the employment of the Polish Armed Forces in the defense of the state;

- defining the premises of the Republic of Poland's Defense Response Plan, including the incorporation of assumptions adopted within the framework of crisis management measures resulting from the Republic of Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;
- specifying the principles for developing national plans for the employment of the Polish Armed Forces for the defense of the state;
- refining and detailing the principles of defense response to external threats to state security;
- adopting new solutions regarding operational employment plans for the Armed Forces. It is stipulated that upon the entry into force of a decision by the President of the Republic of Poland ordering mobilization or the employment of the Armed Forces for the defense of the Republic of Poland, the national plan for the employment of the Armed Forces for state defense transforms into a defense operation plan;
- introducing standing defense plans. The draft introduces standing defense plans, developed to address threats—including hybrid threats—that arise suddenly or with short warning times. These plans encompass, among other things, countermeasures against adverse activities in cyberspace. In this regard, the regulation addresses threats arising from the use of modern technologies in actions detrimental to the state;
- refining the premises of defense programming. In this area, the tasks of the President of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers regarding the issuance of general and detailed guidelines for the development of the Polish Armed Forces have been harmonized.

The draft did not address the hierarchy and interdependencies of strategic and planning documents, nor the mechanisms for their implementation.

3.4. The role and significance of strategic national security reviews and strategic defense reviews

A fundamental principle of security is the necessity of taking into account worst-case scenarios or unpredictable events, even if the likelihood of their occurrence is low. Political threats generally take precedence within the security system, while other dangers rank second.

Political threats give rise to threats in other categories—such as military, energy, economic, social, environmental, and information-related threats, among others. Political threats typically originate in the external environment; however, they can also arise from within.[166] When analyzing the essence and significance of the national security strategy for shaping state security, it is essential to emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach—not only within the document itself but also in state policy. The strategy should be modified and updated, typically through a strategic review process that verifies the underlying assumptions of the general, domain-specific, and sectoral strategies.[167] Legal regulations do not define which strategies are general, sectoral, or domain-specific in nature. The only reference is found in Article 9, point 3 of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Conducting Development Policy. It indicates that "other development strategies" are documents defining the fundamental conditions, objectives, and directions of development relating to sectors, domains, regions, or spatial development.[168] Strategic national security reviews and strategic defense reviews should serve as one of the methods for identifying shortcomings in the legal system. To date, the Ministry of National Defence has conducted three Strategic Defence Reviews (SPO) and one Strategic National Security Review (SPBN). It should be noted that the conduct of these defense and security reviews was not mandated by law. Despite this evident legal gap, the decision to carry them out was made based on experience and needs identified at the level of Armed Forces command and control, as well as national security management at the political level.

The first Strategic Defence Review was conducted between 2004 and 2006. The review highlighted the need to reform the Armed Forces.[169] However, the results were not published, as they were classified.[170] However, the results of this review did not lead to changes in the legal framework of the national security system. A subsequent defense review was conducted between 2009 and 2011, with the unclassified report presented in April 2011. Analyses carried out as part of this review indicated that operational and armament programs would be crucial

[166] W.Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i praktyka, Józefów 2012, s. 20.
[167] J. Pawłowski, Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego RP wyznacznikiem roli administracji publicznej w procesie przygotowań obronnych państwa, w: M. Kuliczkowski (red.) Administracja publiczna w procesie przygotowań obronnych państwa, Warszawa 2018, s. 50–51.
[168] z.U. z 2023 r., poz. 225
[169] Depesza Polskiej Agencji Prasowej z 2 marca br. dotycząca reformy systemu kierowania i dowodzenia Siłami Zbrojnymi RP, Biuro Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, 2 marca 2013 r., https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/wydarzenia/4445,PAP-Reforma-dowodztw-ujednolice-nie-struktur-na-czas-wojny-i-pokoju.html (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).
[170] T. Dmitruk, Strategiczny Przegląd Obronny 2016, Dziennik Zbrojny, 31 maja 2017 r., https://dziennikzbrojny.pl/artykuly/art,2,4,10585,armie-swiata,wojsko-polskie,strategicz-ny-przeglad-obronny-2016 (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.)

to the future shape of the Polish Armed Forces.[171] Work on the review revealed that the Armed Forces tended to view reality primarily through the lens of risk avoidance and the ad hoc mitigation of weaknesses. This suggested an inward-looking orientation rather than one focused on the external environment, potentially leading to missed opportunities arising from that environment. The conclusions also point to a tendency to prioritize a lower-risk strategy of mere endurance (survival) over a dynamic strategy that entails higher—though still acceptable—levels of risk. Such a minimalist approach risked forfeiting or limiting the benefits of emerging opportunities, thereby potentially undermining success. This observation is particularly significant given the increasing extent to which the course of a war depends on a range of non-military factors—political, economic, social, environmental, psychological, cultural, and even religious. Consequently, the Supreme Commander must take these factors into account when planning military operations. To conduct a comprehensive analysis and assessment of the situation before making a decision, the commander must make extensive and in-depth use of the expert assistance provided by specialists in the relevant field.

During the 2011 Strategic Defence Review (SPO), a concept emerged to place a Chief of Defence at the head of the armed forces, with the commanders of the individual Service Branches and the Chief of the General Staff—reconfigured from a command body into a planning body—reporting to him. It was also proposed to establish a board of Service Branch commanders, modeled on the US system. The findings of the 2011 review did not result in any legislative changes, either. According to S. Koziej, the main strategic preparatory tasks for the national security command subsystem include, among others:

- streamlining the legal framework by adopting an act on national security command (or an act on national security) to ensure strategic control and efficient management of the Republic of Poland's national security system at the political-strategic level;
- ensuring, at the organizational level, a unified structure for the management apparatus covering all states and circumstances of the state's functioning;
- establishing a government coordination body (e.g., a Council of Ministers committee for national security, supported by a Government Security Centre with expanded competencies);
- clarifying the division of responsibilities regarding crisis management following the split of the Ministry of the Interior and Administration into two separate ministries;

[171] Strategiczny Przegląd Obronny. Profesjonalne Siły Zbrojne RP w nowoczesnym państwie, Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa, kwiecień 2011, s. 13, https://gdzie-wojsko.wordpress.com/wp content/uploads/2011/05/raport_spo_14042011.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

- preparing the relevant bodies and their supporting administrative offices to operate within an integrated command system;
- preparing the infrastructure necessary for the command system to function, as well as integrating and streamlining the numerous organizational and planning entities;
- building and integrating telecommunications systems and IT support for the decision-making process.

In turn, the refinement, transformation, and development of operational subsystems within the defense subsystem should focus on:

- enacting legislation on defense (defense obligations) to replace the Act on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland, as well as laws governing the military service of professional soldiers, the restructuring and technical modernization of the Armed Forces, and their financing;
- accelerating the transformation process, particularly the organizational and positional consolidation of the Armed Forces;
- reorganizing (consolidating) the command and control system at the political-strategic and operational levels;
- developing the capabilities of operational (combat) forces, prioritizing information systems, air and missile defense, and land force mobility (especially regarding helicopters);
- developing capabilities to conduct independent anti-surprise operations, receive Allied reinforcement forces in Poland, and conduct joint defense operations;
- improving the training system, including the consolidation of the military education system;
- ensuring a communications system that enables the Armed Forces to cooperate with emergency services, law enforcement agencies, and provincial crisis management centers.[172]

The need for changes to the security system was highlighted in the 2013 White Paper on the National Security of the Republic of Poland.[173] This document stated, among other things, that we must define our strategic interests, objectives, and the means to achieve them in light of new conditions, while also transforming the entire national security system with the aim of integrating it.[174] It was noted that the state of Poland's national security system significantly

[172] S. Koziej, *Studia o bezpieczeństwie*…, op. cit., s. 222–223.
[173] Biała Księga była jawną prezentacją wyników SPBN.
[174] Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2013, s. 6,

influences the substance of its national interests and strategic security objectives. Currently, the system is essentially an aggregate of distinct operational and support subsystems interconnected in various ways featuring a national security management subsystem that lacks internal coherence, which hinders synergy. Responsibilities are fragmented or duplicated across various entities, there is an excess of planning bodies, and coordination is limited. There is also a lack of coherent legislation, particularly regarding the national security management subsystem. This situation creates a risk of competency gaps on the one hand and leads to unnecessary duplication of effort on the other; this results in the waste of available forces and resources, rendering the system both uneconomical and inefficient. However, during Bronisław Komorowski's presidency, it proved impossible to establish a hierarchy and define the interdependencies of strategic documents in the national security sphere, or to draft the necessary legislative amendments.

Work on the subsequent Strategic Defence Review (SPO) was initiated during a conference held on July 14, 2016. The decision to conduct the review was driven by challenges associated with defining the future nature, size, and structure of the Polish Armed Forces, as well as their capability requirements. The review's final conclusions highlighted, among other issues, the vast number of regulations scattered across numerous legal acts; inconsistencies in regulations, procedures, and terminology regarding crisis and defense responses; and the defense system's limited capacity to respond adequately and flexibly to dynamic changes in the security environment.[175] As a result of the review, it was determined that "changes to the command and control system are one of the Polish Armed Forces' most pressing needs," and that the effects of implementing these changes should become apparent as early as 2018. An assessment conducted in this area also highlighted, among other issues, the lack of uniformity and the imprecision of the state defense command system as a political-military conflict escalates; the undefined role of the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces; and the command triumvirate within the Polish Armed Forces. The classified results of the 2016 Strategic Defence Review (SPO) served as the basis for developing and publicly releasing the 2017 Defence Concept of the Republic of Poland.[176]

https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/Biala_Ksiega_inter_mm.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

[175] Strategiczny Przegląd Obronny, Prezentacja pełnomocnika Ministra Obrony Narodowej ds. strategicznego przeglądu obronnego, s. 29, https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/strategiczny-przeglad-obronny (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

[176] Koncepcja Obronna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa maj 2017, https://zbrojni.blob.core.windows.net/pzdata2/TinyMceFiles/KORP_DRUK1.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

The Concept noted, among other things, that the Russian Federation seeks to strengthen its position in the global balance of power through various methods. These include violations of international law, the use of force and coercion in relations with other states, and attempts to destabilize Western integration structures. This poses a threat primarily to Poland and other countries in the region, but also to other nations with an interest in a stable international order. Russia's ultimate goal remains the establishment of a new international order based on a socalled "Concert of Powers." Particular concern arises from Russia's use of military force to achieve political objectives—exemplified by the 2008 war with Georgia, the illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, and the 2014 aggression against Ukraine. Russia is prepared to destabilize other nations and undermine their territorial integrity, openly violating international law in the process. Its actions are often covert and conducted below the threshold of open warfare. Simultaneously, Russia is implementing a large-scale military modernization plan, conducting an intensive exercise program, and militarizing its society. Military spending is a priority and will remain high even amidst prolonged economic stagnation. Russian policy is closely coordinated with special service operations, including the use of "active measures" (such as disinformation campaigns) against other states. Moscow employs tools to reduce the power asymmetry vis-à-vis NATO—such as cyberattacks and threats to use force against specific countries, including the threat of using tactical nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states. This 2017 assessment proved highly accurate following Russia's 2022 attack on Ukraine, launched under the guise of a "special military operation." The war that broke out on February 24, 2022, should be viewed as a continuation of the conflict that began eight years earlier, in February 2014. The seizure of Crimea and the attempt to detach the Donbas from Ukraine were, in fact, a prelude to the unprovoked, full-scale phase of Russian aggression.[177]

3.5. Strategic security documents: an attempt at establishing a hierarchy and interdependencies

In addressing challenges and analyzing contemporary threats within the security environment, every state pursues its own security policy and strategy. According to W. Pokruszyński, the model for formulating security policy generally comprises three fundamental levels of strategic influence on the components of national security management: the parliament and the president, the government, and the analytical-planning center. While

[177] A. Charuk, Plan, który runął. Koncepcja i założenia specjalnej operacji wojskowej w Ukrainie, Magnum-x, https://www.magnum-x.pl/artykul/plan-ktory-runal-koncepcja-i-zalozenia-specjalnej-operacji-wojskowej-w ukrainie (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

models may vary, each must take into account the primary objective: safeguarding the nation's vital interests—namely:

- security;
- independence;
- state sovereignty;
- territorial integrity;
- the right to life and development in conditions of peace and stability.

In this crucial area—regarding the definitive ordering of politics, *raison d'état*, and strategy within the hierarchy of values—*raison d'état* should be placed first, politics second, and strategy third. Such an arrangement of fundamental values enables a proper—and not merely formal—examination of all categories of national, regional, and international security.[178] The legal basis for issuing the National Security Strategy was not established until 2002, following an amendment to the Act of 21 November 1967 on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland.[179] Article 4a(1)(1) of the aforementioned Act outlines the procedure for adopting the strategy but does not express a view regarding the document's status within the Polish legal system. Consequently, it is difficult to unequivocally determine the rank of security, defense, and military strategy documents.[180] The first attempt to establish a hierarchy of defense-related strategic documents was undertaken by the Ministry of National Defence's Department of Strategy and Defence Planning (DSiPO MON) in 2012, likely in connection with the Strategic National Security Review conducted by the National Security Bureau (BBN).[181] Proposals were then presented regarding the interdependencies between documents in the fields of defense programming and operational planning, viewed in the context of the National Security Strategy and the Long- and Medium-Term National Development Strategies. These interdependencies are based on logical connections derived from scholarly analysis and military practice, yet they do not address the issue of legal coherence.

The tasks set out in the 2020 National Security Strategy[182] included reviewing and establishing the hierarchy and interdependencies of strategic and planning documents—as well

[178] W. Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo, op. cit., s. 33–34.
[179] Art. 35 Ustawy z dnia 29 sierpnia 2002 r. o stanie wojennym oraz o kompetencjach Naczelnego Dowódcy Sił Zbrojnych i zasadach jego podległości konstytucyjnym organom Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Dz.U. 2002, nr 156, poz. 1301.
[180] J. Pawłowski, Strategia…, op. cit., s. 52
[181] Taki wniosek można wyciągnąć z komentarza do schematu, w którym odnosi się do zarządzenia Prezydenta RP z 24 listopada 2010 r. w sprawie przeprowadzenia Strategicznego Przeglądu Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego oraz planu opublikowania Białej Księgi do końca 2012 r.
[182] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z 2020 r.

as their implementation mechanisms—regarding national security, state defense, and the country's socio-economic development (Section 1.6 of the NSS). During analytical work conducted at the National Security Bureau (BBN) in 2023, it was determined that the proposed approach to document hierarchization should be applied across three dimensions:

- in terms of complementarity, coherence, and legal interdependence (or the absence thereof);
- regarding substantive derivation and interdependence;
- regarding the temporal coherence of the documents in terms of their drafting and updating.

The guiding principle adopted is that any document of strategic importance must have a legal basis in an act of parliament. This is because the authority to issue a document that establishes specific rights and obligations for other public administration bodies can derive from a statute. Documents of purely internal departmental significance do not require a statutory basis, but neither may they be designated as strategic.

A review and in-depth analysis of legal acts revealed the existence of approximately 30 documents of strategic importance to national security that should be interconnected within the legal framework. It was found that some documents had lost the legal basis for their development (e.g., the Economic Mobilization Program), while others lacked a legal basis for their creation (e.g., the Military Strategy), had not yet been issued (e.g., Recommendations for the Defense Preparations of the Republic of Poland), or their issuance had been discontinued (e.g., the Strategy for the Development of the National Security System of the Republic of Poland).

It is crucial to align national documents with processes stemming from international treaties and agreements. In the modern era, the scope of international security extends beyond the purely military issues that dominated the past; it now encompasses other equally significant areas—geopolitical, economic, demographic, institutional, energy-related, informational, cultural, and social. This shift is driven, on the one hand, by new challenges and threats to global peace and stability and, on the other, by new phenomena and processes that intensified toward the end of the 20th century. These include, among others: the collapse of the bipolar world and the emergence of a new international order; globalization as an objective phenomenon and the trend toward integration; scientific and technological progress; the information revolution; the surge in global terrorism; organized crime; ethnic conflicts; climate-related threats; and human rights violations. Consequently, the 21st century confronts humanity not only with

challenges but also with specific demands and responsibilities across every sphere. For this reason, a politician's professionalism and preparedness to hold positions of state responsibility must serve as the fundamental criterion—regardless of their political or other views. This principle should be indisputable.[183]

Strategic documents relevant to national security that require mutual coordination in terms of substantive interdependence or the competences of the relevant authorities include:

- The National Development Concept referred to in Article 8a of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Development Policy;
- The Medium-Term National Development Strategy referred to in Article 9(2) of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Conducting Development Policy;
- The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland referred to in Article 24(1)(2) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;
- The Strategy for the Development of the National Security System of the Republic of Poland and other sectoral strategies, which should be related to Article 9(3) of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Conducting Development Policy;
- The Military Strategy (no legal basis for its preparation);
- Recommendations for the Defence Preparations of the Republic of Poland referred to in Article 24(1)(3) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;
- Defence planning objectives within the North Atlantic Treaty Organization resulting from NATO's Strategic Concept,[184] adopted at various NATO summits;
- The Political and Strategic Defence Directive of the Republic of Poland referred to in Article 24(1)(4) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;
- National plans for the use of the Armed Forces for the defence of the state referred to in Article 25(1)(2)(a) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;
- The Programme for the Development of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland referred to in Article 36(2) of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;
- The Package for Strengthening the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland for 2023–2025 referred to in Article 794 of the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defence of the Homeland;

[183] W. Pokruszyński, Bezpieczeństwo…, op. cit., s. 71–72.
[184] Zob. np.: Koncepcja strategiczna obrony i bezpieczeństwa członków Organizacji Traktatu Północnoatlantyckiego, przyjęta przez szefów państw i rządów w Lizbonie 20 listopada 2010 r., Biuro Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/01/ koncepcja_strategiczna_nato_tlumaczenie.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

- Integrated plans for functioning in the area of security (no legal regulation).

The concept of national development referred to in Article 8a of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Development Policy is not a strategy. It does not set quantified goals or a path for achieving them. Instead, it outlines Poland's development challenges—identifying potential barriers and opportunities over a multi-decade horizon (up to 30 years) based on the trends expected to have the greatest impact on the country. The concept demonstrates how to integrate key dimensions—social, economic, and spatial—along with institutional and environmental aspects, to ensure that policy actions generate synergistic effects. One tool designed to facilitate this integration and better leverage the potential of both specific policies and individual territories is the functional-spatial structure model; this model was developed as part of the work on the Concept, reflecting an integrated approach.[185] The Concept does not single out specific security spheres; analyses conducted by the National Security Bureau (BBN) demonstrated that national security cannot be separated from other areas of state functioning. It is worth noting that the European Union lacks formalized rules for formulating strategies including the identification of needs, necessary financial resources, and sources of funding. In Poland, such rules are defined in the 2006 Act on the Principles of Development Policy; however, they do not apply to strategies developed under other legal regulations, such as the National Security Strategy. This presents a significant issue, as the feasibility of a strategy depends on the adoption of specific principles for its formulation and implementation including the definition of forecasting indicators, the assignment of areas of responsibility, the estimation of costs and funding sources, and the adoption of monitoring and reporting methodologies.

When analyzing the hierarchy and interdependencies of strategic documents concerning national security, it is essential to cite Article 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, which defines the fundamental national interests of the Republic. This provision stipulates that the Republic of Poland safeguards its independence and the inviolability of its territory, ensures the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens as well as the safety of its citizens, protects the national heritage, and ensures environmental protection, guided by the principle of sustainable development. Particular emphasis, however, should be placed on the final part of this provision, which addresses the obligation of state authorities to be guided by the principle of sustainable development while pursuing these interests. The principle of sustainable development constitutes a constitutionally protected value and applies to all spheres of social relations

[185] Koncepcja rozwoju kraju 2050, Instytut Rozwoju Miast i Regionów, https://irmir.pl/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Zalacznik-nr-3.-KRK2050_Uwarunkowania_istota_organizacja-prac_23.09.2022.pdf (dostęp: 10 maja 2025 r.).

governed by constitutional provisions—including Article 5 of the Constitution—that reference "development" or "sustainable development." Sustainable development entails conducting all development processes in a manner that maintains a balance between regions, human needs and aspirations, and between undertaken investments and the constraints they may entail.

To this end, competent state authorities formulate appropriate strategies to guide the initiation and implementation of actions aimed at ensuring the country's lasting and sustainable development; socio-economic, regional, and spatial cohesion; enhanced economic competitiveness; and job creation at the national, regional, or local level within the framework of development policy. Regarding medium-term planning, the Strategy for Responsible Development (SOR) is currently in force; it serves as an update to the country's medium-term development strategy, in accordance with the requirements of the Act of 6 December 2006 on the Principles of Conducting Development Policy (Art. 9 point 2). It is the primary national development strategy, defining the fundamental conditions, objectives, and directions of the country's development across social, economic, regional, and spatial dimensions.

It should be emphasized that the SOR addresses national security issues, encompassing both external and internal security. Specifically, it includes an assessment of the security environment, objectives and expected outcomes, indicators (such as defense spending), intervention priorities, and strategic projects. Operating in parallel is the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (SBN), developed by the Council of Ministers and approved by the President of the Republic of Poland in accordance with the Act on the Defense of the Homeland. This document outlines a comprehensive vision for shaping Poland's national security across all dimensions, albeit without a specific timeframe. Thus, a form of feedback loop exists: the SOR influences the SBN and vice versa—particularly given the SOR's directive nature and its scheduled implementation over a defined period (15 years, subject to updates). The SOR specifies indicators, funding sources, and the entities responsible for executing particular areas (programs and projects). Legal regulations do not govern the interdependencies between these documents; consequently, there are no clear grounds to deem one strategy superior or subordinate to the other. Rather, the content of both documents points to the necessity of maintaining their coherence and alignment. Properly aligning strategic cycles is crucial to the planning and programming process.

To address the need to align the development and updating of these documents on a timeline, the National Security Bureau (BBN) created a conceptual framework illustrating the planning logic connecting the National Security Strategy, the Political-Strategic Defence

Directive, the Armed Forces Employment Plans, and the Republic of Poland's Defence Response Plan. The term limits of the authorities referred to in Article 10 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland—namely the President of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers—are of significant importance. The five-year term of the President was adopted as the reference point, given the different temporal constraints governing the Council of Ministers, whose term is linked to the four-year parliamentary election cycle. It should be recalled that the powers of the President of the Republic of Poland include, among others:

- Submitting recommendations regarding the National Security Strategy to the Council of Ministers before the Council begins drafting the document.
- Approving the National Security Strategy by way of an official order, upon the motion of the Prime Minister.
- Submitting recommendations to the Council of Ministers regarding the Republic of Poland's defence preparations.
- Issuing—by way of an official order and upon the motion of the Prime Minister—the Political-Strategic Defence Directive of the Republic of Poland and other documents implementing the National Security Strategy.
- Approving, upon the motion of the Prime Minister, plans for national defence system exercises—organized cyclically at least every four years with the participation of the highest state authorities—and directing the conduct of these exercises.
- Determining, upon the motion of the Minister of National Defence, the main directions of development for the Armed Forces and their preparations for the defence of the state.
- Approving, upon the motion of the Minister of National Defence and by way of a formal order: national plans for the employment of the Armed Forces in the defence of the state, as well as the organization and operating principles of the wartime command system for the Armed Forces.[186]

By reviewing legal acts and analyzing four key documents in the area of national security:

- National Security Strategy,
- Political-Strategic Defense Directive,
- National Plans for the Employment of Armed Forces.
- Defense Response Plan of the Republic of Poland and its implementing documents.

Two processes were also analyzed:

- Strategic National Security Review.

[186] Art. 24 i 25 Ustawy z dnia 11 marca 2022 r. o obronie Ojczyzny.

● Strategic Defense Review. Research indicates that the cycle of verification, planning, and exercising spans approximately 60 months—the duration of a full term of the President of the Republic of Poland. To accelerate decision-making processes within the planning cycle, it was posited that the findings of the Strategic National Security Review (SNSR)—conducted toward the end of the incumbent President's term—could serve as analytical material for the incoming President. Consequently, an optimal approach would be to conduct the SNSR late in the presidential term, ensuring the new President has an analytical document at the outset; this could form the basis for issuing recommendations for a new National Security Strategy, developed, of course, in close cooperation with the government administration. This process could be linked to the conduct of a Strategic Defence Review under the new President's administration. Issuing a new National Security Strategy early in the presidential term would enable the initiation of a new planning cycle. Another solution involves decoupling the planning cycle from political-level changes; however, this carries the risk that a new administration, seeking to implement its own approaches, might block processes already underway. This creates a danger of planning chaos, as planning activities at lower levels of authority could not be brought to completion. Such a strategic planning model would allow for the approval of the National Security Strategy as early as the sixth month of the new President's term, followed by the issuance of the Political-Strategic Defence Directive of the Republic of Poland after one year. National plans for the employment of the Armed Forces in the defense of the state could be approved no later than the twentieth month of the term. Issuing the Political-Strategic Defence Directive would also enable the activation of operational planning activities within public administration, aligned with the operational planning process of the Polish Armed Forces. Analyses indicate that the primary issue is the excessively long time required to prepare the documents resulting from the Republic of Poland's Defense Response Plan (approximately 34 months). This stems from the organizational premises adopted in the Council of Ministers Regulation of January 14, 2025, regarding the conditions and procedure for planning and financing tasks carried out as part of state defense preparations by government administration bodies, local government units, and business entities (*Journal of Laws 2025, item 73*).

Such a protracted planning cycle has a critical—and predominantly negative—impact on effective operational planning. In the assessment of the National Security Bureau (BBN), it is possible to shorten the planning cycle at the level of government and local government administration; this would automatically affect how these tasks align with the assumptions and objectives of military plans, particularly the identified needs of the armed forces. It is therefore

necessary to limit the time required to prepare operational planning documents within government and local government administration to a maximum of 1.5 years by streamlining the consultation and approval process. An analysis of these processes indicates that the operational planning timeframe in public administration could be reduced even further by adopting an approach involving the parallel execution of specific tasks across different levels of authority.

National defense system exercises constitute a crucial element of executing defense planning tasks. Upon the motion of the Prime Minister, the President of the Republic of Poland approves the plans for these exercises—which are organized periodically, at least every four years, with the participation of the highest state authorities—and oversees their conduct. The objective of the exercises is to verify established planning assumptions and identify any shortcomings in the state's defense preparations. These exercises may conclude the planning cycle and precede the conduct of the Strategic National Security Review (SPBN). As previously noted, the SPBN process may be linked to the conduct of the Strategic Defense Review (SPO). The analysis conducted may serve as a basis for the National Security Bureau (BBN) to draft legal solutions regulating the interdependencies between the National Security Strategy (SBN), the country's medium-term development strategy, and related outcome documents. The proposed legal solutions concern:

- the SBN, the pillars of the Republic of Poland’s national security, and areas of cooperation among entities performing tasks related to state resilience;
- defining the foundations for developing the SBN, including the concept for the country's development;
- obligations arising from Poland’s membership in NATO and the European Union, as well as from international agreements;
- recommendations from the President of the Republic of Poland regarding the National Security Strategy;
- defining the interdependencies between the SBN and the National Defense System Plan (PSDO) in the area of operational planning, as well as between the SBN and the country's medium-term development strategy regarding defense programming;
- identifying implementing documents for the SBN and the role of development programs in relation to sectoral and domain-specific strategies;
- the process of monitoring SBN implementation;
- the principles of planning cycles;

- criteria for ensuring task continuity in state defense preparations, including principles for updating the SBN, the PSDO, and the Republic of Poland's Defense Response Plan;
- principles for conducting the Strategic National Security Review;
- principles for organizing national defense system exercises;
- principles for conducting the Strategic Defense Review and for developing and implementing the defense strategy;
- objectives and principles for issuing recommendations by the President of the Republic of Poland regarding the National Security Strategy and the Republic of Poland's defense preparations, as well as their relationship to other documents;
- the role and objectives of the "Main Directions for the Development of the Armed Forces and Their Preparation for State Defense" and their relationship to other documents;
- the principles and objectives of the Strategy for the Development of the National Security System of the Republic of Poland;
- the principles and objectives of the Military Strategy;
- tasks and organization of the National Security Council.

The proposed legal solutions were submitted to the Minister of National Defence by the Head of the National Security Bureau (BBN) in May 2024. This topic was raised by the President of the Republic of Poland during a briefing for the senior leadership of the Ministry of National Defence and the Polish Armed Forces on February 5, 2025.

CONCLUSIONS

National defense tasks are carried out not only by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland but also—to the extent prescribed by law—by public administration bodies, business entities, and citizens. Analyses indicate that certain legal and procedural arrangements can hinder the conduct of defense operations. Legal loopholes can effectively destabilize both the preparations for and the execution of defense operations, leading to jurisdictional confusion and decision-making paralysis. The identified issues regarding the application of the law require statutory regulation, as they concern the competencies of state bodies and—in the event of a military operation—also affect business entities and citizens. Strategic national security reviews and strategic defense reviews should serve as a means of identifying shortcomings in the legal system. There is currently no mechanism to address these systemic issues through Council of Ministers regulations, orders issued by the Minister of National Defence, or lower-

level legal acts. Whenever legal ambiguities or loopholes concern the competencies of state bodies, the necessary regulations must take the form of a statute.

The volatile nature of the security environment means that the effective functioning of all components of the Republic of Poland's security system relies entirely on constructive and efficient cooperation. The operations of the Government Security Centre (RCB) serve as a prime example of this; in the event of a crisis, the Centre implements an action plan involving various entities from the different subsystems of the national security system. Ultimately, the ability to resolve crises or mitigate other threats to state and societal security depends on their collaboration and competence. In a well-functioning security system, a key task is also the continuous monitoring of—and maintenance of comprehensive knowledge regarding—potential threats at the national level, as well as the effort to eliminate or limit them. Entities operating within these subsystems should also engage in extensive information, prevention, and proactive activities at the societal level. After all, possessing basic safety knowledge combined with an awareness of how to apply it practically in the face of a threat—serves as a vital "*safety valve*" capable of significantly mitigating the adverse effects of such threats. As defined by the concept of national security, it is the state—in its institutional capacity—that should guarantee the protection of its citizens' lives and property, regardless of the situation and, above all, at all times. Society holds an inviolable constitutional right to such protection against threats ranging from natural and industrial disasters to military dangers, particularly those associated with armed conflict. Responsibility for ensuring security in Poland lies with all government and local government administration bodies, as well as non-governmental institutions that often operate in coordination with state or local authorities. These institutions are obliged to uphold and implement these constitutional guarantees in both peacetime and wartime; meanwhile, citizen assistance and engagement—shaped by the values and norms deeply rooted in the state—become a moral and natural duty. Given the potential for diverse threats arising from a rapidly changing security environment, specialized entities are often enlisted to participate in the state-level security process; these are forces whose primary task is to execute decisive responses and actions tailored to the specific nature of the threat facing the country. To achieve the desired outcomes, all these entities must operate within a single, efficient system that functions continuously during peacetime within a defined organizational structure, yet is capable of scaling up to the necessary size during times of crisis, including war.

Chapter IV

THE EVOLUTION OF POLAND'S SECURITY STRATEGY AFTER 1989

4.1. Determinants of the transformation of Poland's security system

The evolution of Poland's security strategy since 1989 has progressed from a focus 6on autonomous defense and efforts to join Western structures—specifically NATO and the EU—to a shift in the paradigm of how national security is perceived; this new approach relies fundamentally on the progressive strengthening of national capabilities aimed at establishing direct deterrence. This is essential in light of the annexation of Crimea (2014) and the full-scale aggression against Ukraine (2022).

Legal regulations defining the state's national security strategy since 1989 are of significant importance to the current shape of Poland's security. The foundation of Polish legislation is the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 1997, Article 5 of which states: "*The Republic of Poland shall safeguard the independence and integrity of its territory and ensure the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens, the security of the citizens, and the safeguarding of the national heritage, as well as shall ensure the protection of the natural environment pursuant to the principles of sustainable development*."[187]

Redefining security policy became a necessity following the restoration of Poland's sovereignty and the onset of the transformation process. The newly formed Polish government made integrating the country into Euro-Atlantic structures a primary objective. One of the most important and urgent tasks following 1989 was to formulate a national strategy and define an independent security policy, including one regarding national defense.[188] The National Security Strategies of the Republic of Poland are key strategic documents. They define the most important national interests and outline fundamental strategic objectives regarding security and defense. According to General Stanisław Koziej, these strategies should be categorized into those created shortly after 1989—amidst Poland's regaining of sovereignty and strategic autonomy and its NATO accession negotiations—and those developed after 1999, once Poland had already joined the Alliance.

[187] Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 roku [online].
[188] Stanisław Koziej, Adam Brzozowski, Strategie bezpieczeństwa narodowego RP 1990–2014. Refleksja na ćwierćwiecze [w:] Robert Kupiecki (red.), Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Pierwsze 25 lat Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Pierwsze 25 lat, Wojskowe Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej im. płk. dypl. Mariana Porwita, Warszawa 2015.

Key strategic documents from the 1990–2020 period include:

- 1945–1989 Warsaw Pact Defense Doctrine;
- 1990 Defense Doctrine of the Republic of Poland;
- 1992 Foundations of Polish Security Policy and Security Policy and Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2000 Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland and Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2003 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2007 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2009 Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2010–2012 Strategic National Security Review;
- 2014 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland;
- 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland.

To systematize the discussion on the evolution of Poland's security strategy, it is worth outlining the phases of this evolution between 1989 and 2026. The 1990s were a period of ongoing transformation and a focus on autonomous defense capabilities, shaped by factors such as:

- the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact and the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland;
- the creation of the first official strategic documents, such as the *Foundations of Polish Security Policy* (1992) and the *National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland* (2000);
- the acquisition of security guarantees through Poland's accession to NATO structures in 1999.

Research indicates that Polish strategies since 1999 have been influenced by changing circumstances—such as Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance—and that their provisions aligned with the content of the Alliance's strategic concepts. The first strategy adopted under these conditions was the 2000 Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland. This strategy stated that Poland faced no threat of direct military aggression in the foreseeable future. This served as a gesture toward NATO, which had just assumed the role of guarantor of Poland's security, while simultaneously expressing an expectation that the Alliance would protect the country. The strategy identified significant threats and challenges to Poland's security, including a rising number of local crises and the excessive concentration of military

capabilities in certain regions. Attention was also drawn to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; threats associated with illegal cross-border migration, terrorism, and organized crime; environmental hazards; the activities of foreign intelligence services; and issues regarding information protection. The authors of the 2000 strategy took a broad approach to Poland's security environment, identifying numerous threats and challenges. However, in the view of some military experts, the strategy's substantive value was limited, as it focused on only two dimensions of state security: foreign policy and defense.[189] When comparing this issue-oriented approach with the assessment of the security environment found in the Washington Concept, we can see that the Polish security strategy includes references to the activities of special services and environmental threats—aspects treated quite differently by the authors of the NATO strategy. In the Washington Concept, environmental issues are presented as an aspect of security rather than a source of threats. Intelligence activities are not highlighted at all in the NATO concept. Both documents assess the risk of a direct military attack as low, and other challenges and threats are addressed in a similar manner.

The adoption of Poland's 2003 National Security Strategy[190] was driven by rapidly shifting geostrategic conditions at both the European and global levels. International terrorism was intensifying—highlighted by the September 11, 2001 attacks in the US—and the United States had launched the global war on terror; meanwhile, the conflict in Iraq was ongoing, Poland's accession to the EU was approaching, and cooperation with Russia and Ukraine was being developed. The authors of this strategy—which was quite extensive—assessed the security environment, though they did so in a somewhat disorganized manner.[191] Although S. Koziej and A. Brzozowski view the attempt to comprehensively address national security issues in the 2003 strategy positively, they nonetheless believe that the stated objective was not achieved. According to the authors of the strategy, the risk of war in Europe is minimal. The ongoing conflicts in the Balkans—taking into account their de-escalation—pose virtually no threat to Poland's security; notably, this represents a significant shift compared to the previous strategy. Likewise, disputes in the Caucasus and Transcaucasia pose no risk. It should be emphasized that the geostrategic situation in Europe is evolving favorably. Serious challenges to Poland's security are global in nature; the strategy identifies key threats among them, such as international terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. For the first time

[189] S. Koziej, Bezpieczeństwo: istota, podstawowe kategorie i historyczna ewolucja, „Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe" II–2011, nr 18, Biuro Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego, s. 21.
[190] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2003.
[191] S. Koziej, A. Brzozowski, op. cit., s. 29.

in a document of this kind—a security strategy—policies pursued by authoritarian regimes were identified as a source of threat. Vulnerability to these threats increases alongside advancing globalization and Poland's integration into international structures. Greater emphasis was placed on a wide spectrum of asymmetric threats compared to the previous strategy, with terrorist groups cited as one such source. Significant attention was devoted to organized crime and the activities of foreign intelligence services. Attention was also drawn to sources of threats leading to environmental degradation, as well as demographic risks, mass migration, and the need for energy diversification.

The successive National Security Strategies of the Republic of Poland are significant.[192] The content of the 2007 strategy was far more integrated, although—according to S. Koziej and A. Brzozowski—it lacked internal coherence, as it encompassed various dimensions of the strategic environment, domains and sectors of national security, external and internal factors, as well as military and non-military aspects and issues regarding state security.[193] This strategy features a section titled *National Security Conditions*, which essentially constitutes an assessment of the security environment in terms of opportunities, challenges, and threats. Regional security conditions—specifically the processes and phenomena unfolding in Poland's immediate environment—were identified as the most critical factors, exerting the strongest influence on the country's security. Significant attention was devoted to challenges and threats emanating from the Middle East, driven by Islamic fundamentalism, terrorism, and destabilization. Analyses indicate that the issue of international terrorism has become increasingly significant over time. Compared to the 2003 strategy, greater emphasis was placed on energy-related threats, and renewed focus was directed toward asymmetric threats explicitly designated as such for the first time—stemming from non-state actors. The development of international terrorism and organised crime was also highlighted as a serious threat. The African continent was identified as the region from which the main migration challenge originates (*a new development*).

Significant attention was paid to Poland's demographic issues and the challenges involved in finalizing the transformation of the Polish legal system. Emphasis was also placed on the potential risk of European Union disintegration and challenges stemming from authoritarian regimes. A comparison between the concept drafted by NATO strategists in 1999 and the presented Polish security strategies reveals a greater focus on detail and currency in the content

[192] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2007, https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/SBN_RP.pdf (dostęp: 1 marca 2024 r.).
[193] S. Koziej, A. Brzozowski, op. cit., s. 36.

of the national documents. Furthermore, while the perception of terrorism and asymmetric threats is similar in both sets of documents, the Polish strategies place greater emphasis on potential energy, environmental, and demographic threats.

It should be emphasized that, despite obvious differences, the concepts underlying Poland's security strategy during the period in question were correlated and consistent with NATO's security strategy. On January 25, the Strategic Concept for the Defence and Security of the Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was adopted at the NATO summit in Lisbon, replacing the Washington Concept. The development of the new strategy was driven by radical changes in the global security environment—particularly the threat of terrorism, which had intensified significantly following the 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center. Jeffrey A. Larsen noted that, for the first time in history, the decision to draft the concept was made from the top down[194] by a group of experts under the direction of the NATO Secretary General. Key elements of the security environment outlined in the new concept included the possibility of a conventional attack on NATO territory—deemed unlikely yet significant enough not to be disregarded—as well as the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Instability beyond the Alliance's borders—particularly religious and cultural extremism, transnational crime, terrorism, and other threats—was a source of serious concern. The uncertainty of the security situation stemmed largely from United States involvement in the Gulf War and the war in Afghanistan.

The rapid development of new technologies within the security landscape in 2010 led to an increase in cyberattacks, posing a serious threat not only to government administration and the economy but also to critical infrastructure. Emphasis was also placed on the need to maintain the security of supply chains and energy infrastructure, as well as to counter threats resulting from environmental changes.[195]

The phenomena described could pose a serious threat to Euro-Atlantic security and stability. Strengthening ongoing cooperation among NATO, the European Union, and the UN is essential. Furthermore, the strategy indicated that NATO should establish closer strategic cooperation with Russia. In light of the principles adopted in the Lisbon Concept, a commitment was made to actively cooperate with Russia on missile defense and arms control. The authors of the strategy demonstrated a willingness to engage in constructive cooperation with Moscow

[194] Jeffrey A. Larsen, Is the 2010 Strategic Concept still fit for purpose?, 1 maja 2016 r., https://www.jstor.org/stable/resrep10273?seq=2 (dostęp: 17 lutego 2024 r.).

[195] Koncepcja strategiczna obrony i bezpieczeństwa członków Organizacji Traktatu Północnoatlantyckiego, Warszawa 2010, https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dok/01/koncepcja_stra- tegiczna_nato_tlumaczenie.pdf (dostęp: 1 marca 2024 r.).

on security matters, while simultaneously noting differences regarding certain issues. The strategic partnership between the Alliance and Russia was intended to strengthen Euro-Atlantic security.

It is worth noting that strategic documents were developed in Poland while the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept was in effect. The National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland was produced in 2014, and a subsequent National Security Strategy was drafted in 2020. Both documents outline the security environment conditions that necessitated the development of these strategies. In the view of Stanisław Koziej and Adam Brzozowski, the 2014 strategy was the first to align with the principles of an integrated approach to national security.[196] According to Robert Kupiecki, the strategy is comprehensive; the chapter on the security environment combines diagnosis with prognosis, accurately capturing the main threats while also identifying opportunities and challenges for Poland's security at the global, regional, and national levels.[197] This strategy is not only multifaceted but also more detailed than the previous one. However, it lacks explicit references to the threats associated with climate chang specifically those linked to energy or health security—even though such threats were identified within the strategy itself. Greater attention should also have been paid to the risk of intensified migration and the need for systemic solutions to this issue, for instance, by outlining appropriate policy directions in this area. Such an addition would have served as a logical extension and refinement of the approach to the situation in North Africa, the Middle East, and the Balkans. Furthermore, the strategy fails to address internal stability and national cohesion, including the essential aspect of political and social integration.[198]

It is evident that a state weakened internally—torn by ongoing political, religious, social, or identity-based conflicts—is simultaneously marginalized on the international stage and loses its standing in relations with other nations, thereby becoming more vulnerable to external interference. The strategy under analysis outlines the security environment across national, regional, and global dimensions. The authors highlight, among other issues, the weakening of the conventional arms control regime and the confidence-building system in Europe;[199] this has resulted in a steady decline in trust among states—particularly within the OSCE area—and a diminishing of the organization's effectiveness, as demonstrated by Russia's 2008 attack on

[196] S. Koziej, A. Brzozowski, op. cit., s. 39.
[197] R. Kupiecki, Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego RP 2014 jako instrument polityki państwa. Uwarunkowania zewnętrzne i aspekty procesowe, „Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe" 2015, nr 33, s. 32-33.
[198] K. Komorowski, Kłopoty z najnowszą strategią bezpieczeństwa RP, „Przegląd Nauk o Obronności" 2016, t.1, s. 45–46.
[199] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2014, https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/SBN%20RP.pdf (dostęp: 1 marca 2024 r.).

Georgia. It is worth noting that the documents highlight the importance of maintaining the security of energy supplies and infrastructure—essential not only for the state's own security but also for that of the entire region. Following the Russian Federation's annexation of Crimea in 2014, awareness grew in Poland regarding the need to diversify energy supply sources and to break free from dependence on Russia as quickly as possible. Previously, NATO had not perceived the threat from Russia that Poland feared; the Alliance had viewed the Russian Federation as a partner in maintaining security across the transatlantic region.

It should be noted that the Lisbon concept served as a point of reference for the 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, which highlighted the unpredictability of changes in the security environment—exemplified by instances of certain states violating international law on the international stage. The 2020 strategy identified Russia's neo-imperial policy as the greatest threat not only to Poland's security environment but also to the European security system.[200] The 2020 security strategy makes direct reference to China and highlights the significance of the rivalry between the United States, China, and Russia—a key factor shaping the international system. However, while this assertion is entirely justified, it is far from sufficient. The strategy also underscores the importance of cybersecurity in countering the hybrid warfare currently being waged by the Russian Federation, and emphasizes the need to leverage cutting-edge technologies to build an efficient digital economy. The currently binding **National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland (2020)** is the key strategic document highlighting the increased risk of the use of tactical nuclear weapons in a conventional military operation—including as a means of conflict de-escalation[201]—as well as the threats posed by terrorism and the activities of organized crime groups. The migration crisis at the Polish-Belarusian border in 2021 sparked growing concern due to the risk that criminals linked to organized crime groups might infiltrate the ranks of migrants attempting to enter Polish territory. Energy and infrastructure security were highlighted as key priorities. It is worth noting that between 2014 and 2020, Poland was involved in projects such as the expansion of the LNG terminal in Świnoujście, Via Carpatia, Via Baltica, Rail Baltica, and the Baltic Pipe.

The characterizations of the conditions shaping Poland's security environment, as outlined in the National Security Strategies of the Republic of Poland from 2014 and 2020, were aligned with the 2010 NATO Strategic Concept. The Polish strategies not only identified but, more

[200] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2020, https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/Strategia_Bezpieczenstwa_Narodowego_RP_ 2020.pdf (dostęp: 1 marca 2024 r.).

[201] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2020,

importantly, elaborated on the threats, challenges, and opportunities highlighted in the Lisbon Concept. Furthermore, the description of the security environment was expanded and supplemented to include regional factors. Unlike threats to the NATO security environment which primarily concern terrorist attacks and the escalation of military conflicts in the immediate vicinity of Allied territory—Poland's security environment is viewed chiefly through the prism of the threat posed by the Russian Federation. This presents an increasingly significant challenge for ensuring an adequate level of security—not only military but also regarding energy and information—for Central and Eastern Europe. It is important to highlight the significant differences in how Poland and NATO perceive security issues. The Lisbon concept emphasizes and seeks NATO cooperation with Russia—viewed as sharing responsibility for Euro-Atlantic security—and demonstrates a commitment to strengthening political consultations and a willingness to engage in practical cooperation with the Russian Federation.[202] The 2014 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland emphasized that relations between NATO and Russia, as well as between the European Union and Russia, should develop based on full respect for international law.[203] The 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, however, explicitly identifies the neo-imperial policy pursued by the Russian Federation as the most serious threat to Poland.[204] A marked difference is evident in how Poland perceives the threat posed by Russia. The stance articulated in the 2014 security strategy was distinctly moderate, whereas the position presented in the 2020 strategy is decidedly negative. Events of the past decade and the increasingly aggressive foreign policy pursued by the Russian Federation have brought about a fundamental shift in how NATO states perceive Russia—a change underscored in NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept.

4.2. The 2022 NATO Strategic Concept in the context of Poland's future national security strategy

NATO's currently binding Strategic Concept was adopted under entirely new geostrategic conditions that differed significantly from those that had previously shaped the international security environment.

Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine in 2022 fundamentally altered NATO's perspective on the contemporary threats shaping the security environment and its stability, as well as the challenges it faces. An assessment of the security environment was conducted

[202] Koncepcja strategiczna…, op. cit.
[203] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa…, Warszawa 2014, op. cit.
[204] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa…, Warszawa 2020, op. cit.

and incorporated into the *2022 Strategic Concept*, adopted by NATO at the Madrid Summit. The section of the Concept titled *Strategic Environment* includes a statement regarding the Euro-Atlantic area, noting that it is no longer in a state of peace. For the first time since the end of the Cold War, the authors of this Concept have presented such a negative picture of the security environment. Based on this stance taken by NATO strategists, it is reasonable to conclude that a military attack on NATO countries must be considered a possibility under current geostrategic conditions. Such indications appear intended to ensure that the leaders of member states take the risk of armed aggression into account in their actions. It should be noted that this differs from the 2010 NATO concept, which stated that the *Euro-Atlantic area was peaceful and the threat of a conventional attack on NATO territory was low*.[205].

An analysis of the contemporary security environment reveals a landscape dominated by strategic competition, crises, and instability, characterized by interconnected threats. It is no secret that the Russian Federation is currently viewed as the most serious threat—not only to Poland but also to other Alliance members. NATO's strategy highlights the Russian Federation's multidimensional activities, ranging from conventional aggression and cyber operations to hybrid warfare. These threats are viewed from multiple perspectives—not merely in light of the armed attack on Ukraine, but also regarding Russia's strengthening of its nuclear capabilities. Significant concerns also arise from Russia's destabilizing actions in the East and South, as well as its expanding military capabilities in maritime regions and deepening military cooperation with Belarus. This represents a fundamental shift in stance compared to the 2010 concept, which reflected NATO's aspiration to cooperate with Russia.[206]

NATO's fundamental position, as expressed in such a strategic document, regarding potential threats from Russia aligns with Poland's stance on the danger posed by the Russian Federation. This was also **articulated in the 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland**. Another significant change compared to earlier versions of the Alliance's strategy is the direct reference to China and the rather aggressive policy pursued by that state, which also poses a challenge to the security and standing of the Alliance nations.[207] NATO's strategic interest in China is driven by the fact that China competes not only with the West but—above all—with the United States, acting as a primary rival. NATO strategists expressed significant

[205] Koncepcja strategiczna…, op. cit
[206] J. Gotkowska, J. Tarociński, Co po Madrycie? Szczyt NATO a bezpieczeństwo wschodniej flanki, „Komentarze OSW", 5 lipca 2022 r., https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/komentarze-osw/2022-07-05/co-po-madrycie-szczyt-nato-a-bezpieczenstwo-wschodniej-flanki (dostęp: 1 marca 2024 r.).
[207] P. Daehnhardt, NATO's new Strategic Concept and the EU's Strategic Compass face reality: Euro-Atlantic security and defense in the context of the war in Ukraine, "Atlantisch Perspectief" 2022, t. 46, nr 4, s. 7.

concern in the 2022 strategy regarding the deepening cooperation between Russia and China. Asymmetric threats and international terrorism remain serious dangers for Poland and other Alliance members. Furthermore, the situation in Africa and the Middle East is a source of concern.[208] The current concept also points to other threats, such as cybercrime, an uncontrolled arms race, the proliferation of WMD, environmental changes, and excessive investment in new technologies by nations hostile to NATO. It is hard to disagree with Thierry Tardy's vision of the security environment for the coming years—that *a grim picture is emerging (...), war has returned to Europe, and NATO cannot ignore this*.[209] The content of the concept outlines potential threats, yet allied strategies are far more general than those prepared by individual states.

It must be emphasized that Poland's membership in the North Atlantic Alliance is of significant importance for the development of its national security strategy. The Alliance's strategic concepts serve as a point of reference for the authors of member states' strategies when preparing necessary updates to their national documents. However, it should be noted that the strategy of the Republic of Poland takes precedence over NATO's strategic concept; its content reflects the country's own perception of threats and, consequently, its definition of the security environment. The primacy of the national strategy reflects the sovereign decision-making of the Polish authorities.

NATO's current Strategic Concept and the 2020 National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland—as well as earlier allied and national documents—have served as the basis for formulating recommendations regarding the assessment of the security environment for the state's next national security strategy:

- when characterizing the security environment, it is essential to highlight the primary threat Russia poses to Poland's security due to the intensification of military operations in Ukraine. Since February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation has been conducting a full-scale invasion of Ukrainian territory. In reality, this represents the next stage of the war that began in 2014. Consequently, there can be no doubt that the Russian Federation is currently the principal threat to Poland—a fact also acknowledged in the Madrid Strategic Concept. Therefore, this should serve as the starting point for assessing the security environment of the Republic of Poland;

[208] Zob. np. J. Gotkowska, J. Tarociński, op. cit
[209] T. Tardy, Six takeaways from NATO's new Strategic Concept, w: T. Tardy (red.), NATO's New Strategic Concept, NATO Defense College, Rzym 2022, s. 8.

- when characterizing the threats posed by Russia, it must be emphasized that this constitutes a direct and multi-domain military threat. Currently, not only Poland but also other states on the eastern flank—and, in a broader context, the rest of NATO face a genuine threat of a conventional Russian attack.

This assessment must be clearly reflected in the provisions of the new strategy. Previous strategies had rated the threat of Russian aggression as minimal, and later as unlikely. At present, the risk of an armed attack by the Russian Federation against Poland is at its highest level in decades. It should also be noted that there is a growing risk of incidents involving violations of Polish airspace; these may be intentional or accidental, given the ongoing war beyond our eastern border. When evaluating the Russian Federation's influence and impact on Poland and Europe, it is essential to consider a wide range of challenges, risks, and threats including non-military ones—across various domains such as diplomacy, information, the economy, and energy. A further conclusion to be drawn is that energy-related challenges and threats should be accorded much higher priority within the strategic hierarchy. Recent events clearly demonstrate that relying on a single country for energy resources leads to imbalances and jeopardizes energy security. The inability to diversify supplies is acutely felt in our region, making it imperative to take concrete steps to mitigate these risks. Mention should also be made of the development of energy projects in Poland, such as those under the *Three Seas Initiative*. Although the issue of energy security has been raised in recent security strategies of the Republic of Poland, the current conditions of the security environment require that it be accorded priority status.

Particular attention should be paid to Russia's disinformation activities, operations conducted by its special services, and cyberattacks. These actions are directed not only against our country but also against other Alliance nations. The Russian Federation also employs such tactics in regions like Africa and the Middle East, where it seeks to build support.[210] It is important to highlight the difficulty involved in assessing China's role within the Republic of Poland's security environment. While Poland is aware of the challenges posed by China's growing stature and recognizes the risks associated with that state, it simultaneously seeks to maintain pragmatic cooperation—particularly in the economic sphere. Consequently, it is difficult to predict how the assessment of China's impact on our national security will evolve in the next strategy. Given the approaches of both the United States and the European Union, it is worth presenting a distinct vision and concept regarding relations with China.

[210] https://www.bezpieczenstwo-narodowe.pl/pdf-186622-109959?filename=Srodowisko-bezpieczenstwa.pdf

At the same time, it is necessary to consider how China's role in Poland's security environment might evolve—particularly in light of deepening military cooperation between Beijing and Moscow, whether in their bilateral relationship or within multilateral frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Escalating US-China rivalry may lead to increasing pressure from the US on European allies—including Poland—to adopt a tougher stance toward China. It is also worth noting that maintaining unity within the European Union will pose a significant challenge. Internal EU divisions may arise over issues such as enlargement policy, treaty revisions, and migration—particularly uncontrolled, mass migration, which currently presents a serious challenge. Close attention must continue to be paid to migration from the Global South, driven by crises, armed conflicts, and climate change. Since 2021, the situation has intensified due to an artificially stoked crisis in which migrants are instrumentalized to create tension and exert pressure on Europe.[211]

The next security strategy will likely identify new challenges and risks to Poland's security environment, such as organized international crime, terrorist threats, arms control, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD). While these are global issues of significance to NATO, their direct impact on Poland is on a smaller scale. Regarding WMD, however, a significant potential threat arises from the Russian Federation's deployment of tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. The national security strategy must place strong emphasis on this issue, particularly given NATO's inadequate response to Moscow's announcement regarding the transfer of nuclear weapons to Belarus. The strategy should clearly and unequivocally define the status of Belarus, which, remaining under the influence of the Russian Federation, poses a serious threat to Poland's security. Evidence of these threats can be seen in Belarus's involvement in the migration crisis on the Polish border and the support it has provided to Russia during the ongoing invasion of Ukraine. I believe that the next strategy must devote significantly greater attention to climate change, which is increasingly affecting Poland's security environment. These changes not only highlight the array of challenges facing our country but also necessitate an energy transition, indicating the direction to be taken regarding the appropriate expenditure of public funds—for instance, on investments in green technologies or the proper protection of natural resources. Among the critical internal challenges currently facing Poland's security environment—and requiring a response—are the ongoing demographic decline (specifically, a drop in the birth rate) and widening social

[211] https://www.bezpieczenstwo-narodowe.pl/pdf-186622-109959?filename=Srodowisko-bezpieczenstwa.pdf

stratification driven by income inequality, which could spark a serious crisis.[212] The preparation of the next strategy should identify opportunities for Poland arising from the evolving security environment. It is worth highlighting Poland's international role in strengthening existing strategic partnerships—such as the one with the United States—while also pursuing new alliances with Asian nations like South Korea and Japan. It is worth noting that South Korea has influenced the Republic of Poland's security environment since becoming a key partner in defense industry cooperation. Including South Korea—as well as Japan, with whom Poland is also deepening ties—in the security strategy would demonstrate a broad approach to global security; this, in turn, would bolster Poland's credibility with these nations and align with the partnerships established with South Korea and Japan within the framework of NATO.[213]

The new strategy must also take into account a risk to the Republic of Poland's security environment that has hitherto been frequently overlooked: the potential scaling back of the United States' military engagement in Europe. Although such a scenario would be highly detrimental to Poland's national interests, it cannot be entirely ruled out, even if it currently appears unlikely. A reduction in the engagement of the US—the guarantor of Euro-Atlantic security—could be driven in the coming years by internal factors, such as a political decision by Donald Trump to potentially curtail American military support in Europe, or by external factors, such as the need to divert equipment, troops, or financial resources to other regions—like the Indo-Pacific, where intense rivalry between the US and China is unfolding alongside the development of US alliances with Southeast Asian nations, or the Middle East. Furthermore, a rapid escalation of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict could also lead to a reduction in US engagement in Europe. Identifying these risks within the new national security strategy should prompt Poland to take appropriate measures to neutralize them and prevent adverse consequences.

4.3. European Union membership and Poland's security

Since May 1, 2004, Poland's membership in the European Union has served as a pillar of the country's stability and security across economic, energy, legal, and geopolitical dimensions. Over the course of more than two decades (2004–2026), the context of this

[212] https://www.bezpieczenstwo-narodowe.pl/pdf-186622-109959?filename=Srodowisko-bezpieczenstwa.pdf

[213] P. Miedziński, NATO i Japonia na nowej ścieżce współpracy na szczycie NATO w Wilnie, strona internetowa Defence24, 9 lipca 2023 r., https://defence24.pl/geopolityka/ nato-i-japonia-na-nowej-sciezce-wspolpracy-na-szczycie-nato-w-wilnie (dostęp: 28 grudnia 2023 r.); N. Matiaszczyk, NATO w Azji: nowe wymiary partnerstwa między Sojuszem Północnoatlantyckim a Koreą Południową i Japonią oraz wyzwania związane z Chinami, Instytut Nowej Europy, 18 lipca 2023 r., https://ine.org.pl/nato-w-azji-nowe-wymiary-part-nerstwa-miedzy-sojuszem-polnocnoatlantyckim-a-korea-poludniowa-i-japonia-oraz-wy-zwania-zwiazane-z-chinami-2/ (dostęp: 28 grudnia 2023 r.).

membership has evolved—shifting from market integration to addressing contemporary crises and hybrid threats posed by Russia. EU membership significantly bolsters Poland's security through economic stability, the development of critical infrastructure, and legal support, as well as through solidarity mechanisms. While ensuring military security is primarily the role of NATO, Poland's membership in the European Union provides the country with a strong political position and enhances its resilience to crises.[214]

Ensuring an appropriate level of security across various dimensions is one of the European Union's objectives. It also occupies a special place in the broader process of deepening European integration, which entails a transition toward increasingly advanced forms of cooperation among member states. It should be emphasized that virtually all integration efforts have incorporated a security dimension; both theoretical proposals and practical initiatives have aimed to guarantee and strengthen security. Consequently, Poland's active participation in the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) remains a fundamental tenet of Polish security policy, alongside its NATO membership.[215] The fundamental premise underlying the security policy is to strengthen the European Union's crisis management capabilities in situations *where NATO as a whole is not engaged*. This means that by developing this policy, the European Union gains a greater capacity for autonomous action, underpinned by appropriate organizational structures and by the forces and defense capabilities provided by member states. Twenty-four European Union countries participate in the implementation of this program. The origins of this policy date back to the beginnings of European integration. In 1948, the Western Union (WU) was established under the Treaty of Brussels to serve as an instrument for the collective defense of its member states. In 1954, following amendments to the Treaty of Brussels, the WU was transformed into the Western European Union (WEU). At the same time, the creation of NATO led to the gradual marginalization of the WEU, eventually resulting in its dissolution.[216]

The idea of strengthening cooperation among European states in the sphere of security and defense was revisited in the early 1990s. The 1992 Maastricht Treaty introduced the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). It was agreed that this policy could lead to the establishment of a common defense policy and, in the future, a common defense—should the Member States so decide. The fundamental objectives of the CFSP were defined as follows:

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[214] https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/aszwoj/articles/aktualnosci-2/bezpieczna-polska-w-bezpiecznej-europie-20-lat-polski-w-unii-europejskiej/

[215] J. M. Nowak, Szósty kraj NATO, [w:] „Polska Zbrojna", nr 35/2010, s. 15.

[216] R. Zięba, Wspólna polityka zagraniczna i bezpieczeństwa UE, Warszawa 2007, s. 20.

safeguarding the common values, fundamental interests, and independence of the Member States; strengthening the security of the European Union and the continent; fostering international cooperation; and consolidating and developing democracy and the rule of law, while respecting human rights. However, the Maastricht Treaty did not equip the common security policy with the instruments necessary for its implementation, particularly regarding operational decision-making and an executive body. Further changes were brought about by the Treaty of Amsterdam, which amended the Treaty on European Union. The Treaty of Amsterdam introduced a new dimension to European security policy by incorporating humanitarian and rescue tasks, peacekeeping and peace-restoring operations, and crisis management—collectively known as the "Petersberg tasks" (previously under the purview of the Western European Union)—into the Treaty on European Union. Furthermore, the position of High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy was established, a role assumed by the Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union.[217]

The Eurocorps is a key element of European security, operating under the aegis of the European Union and NATO. Its origins can be traced back to the Élysée Treaty of January 22, 1963, signed by French President Charles de Gaulle and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Under this agreement, France and Germany committed to strengthening cooperation between their armies and defense industries. This collaboration was further deepened in 1987 with the establishment of a Security and Defence Council between the two nations, paving the way for the creation of the first Franco-German brigade. Subsequently, on October 14, 1991, both countries notified the President of the Council of Europe via a joint letter of their intention to expand this cooperation. Having already laid the foundations for international defense cooperation, François Mitterrand and Helmut Kohl made the official decision to establish the Eurocorps—a military unit comprising troops from both nations—during the La Rochelle summit on May 22, 1992. This bilateral initiative was opened to member states of the Western European Union and NATO and soon took on an international dimension; Belgium joined the project in 1993, followed by Spain in 1994 and Luxembourg in 1996. The Eurocorps quickly became a symbol of cooperation at the military level as well. Under the Maastricht Treaty, it was decided that the European Union as a whole should possess independent armed forces. The Eurocorps was placed at the disposal of the Western European Union.[218] Consequently, on May 29, 1999, during the Franco-German summit in Toulouse, a decision was made to

[217] M. Cini , Unia Europejska: Organizacja i funkcjonowanie, Warszawa 2007, s. 328.
[218] R. Kuźniar, Strategia bezpieczeństwa, [w:] „Polska w Europie", nr 2/2004, s. 9 - 28.

transform the Eurocorps into a rapid reaction force under the command of the European Union and NATO. The decisions adopted by the European Council in Helsinki in December 1999 were pivotal in shaping the content and form of the ESDP. At that time, the parameters of the so-called European Headline Goal (EHG) were established. These envisaged assembling a corps-sized rapid reaction force (50,000–60,000 troops) by 2003, capable of deployment within 60 days and sustaining operations for at least one year. Following these decisions, the transformation of the Eurocorps began in January 2001; by April, work had started on establishing a high-readiness headquarters within the force, which achieved operational capability in 2002. Eurocorps missions can be carried out under the auspices of NATO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Western European Union (WEU), or the United Nations. The force comprises three divisions and two brigades contributed by France, Germany, Belgium, Spain, and Luxembourg. This tactical formation numbers approximately 50,000 troops. Its headquarters is located in Strasbourg and is divided into two main branches, one of which reports to the Supreme Allied Commander of NATO forces. The unit's combat operations commence upon a corresponding decision by the Council of the Western European Union. The activities undertaken by the European Union include tasks such as supporting civilian populations in areas affected by natural disasters, evacuating EU citizens from crisis zones, monitoring ceasefires, and conducting border control and operations involving the use of force. The Eurocorps has already contributed to missions in Sarajevo, Kosovo, and Afghanistan.

After 1989, a primary goal of the Republic of Poland was integration into Western structures. This was a challenging task, given the state of the Polish economy, other legacies of the previous system, and the requirements imposed by the Union at the time. Thanks to the consistent policy pursued by all Polish governments following 1989, this goal was successfully achieved. On May 1, 2004, Poland became a full member of the organization. **Accession to the Union entails the participation of the Republic of Poland in shaping the Common Foreign and Security Policy.** As recent years have shown, the Polish government has been able to effectively cooperate with EU member states in this area to advance our national interests.[219] On July 22, 2003, the Council of Ministers adopted the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, which was approved by the President on September 8 of the same year. The document emphasized that Poland's accession to the European Union strengthened the foundations of the country's national security. It was announced that Poland would actively

[219] S. Parzymies, Stosunki międzynarodowe w Europie 1945-2004, Warszawa 2004, s. 253.

participate in the development of the European Security and Defence Policy as an essential complement to the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and as a mechanism for enhancing the operational capabilities of member states. In the document, Poland supported the development of civilian and military capabilities within the EU, subject to the proviso that they would constitute the European pillar of NATO. The need for the capability-building efforts undertaken within NATO and the EU to complement and reinforce one another was highlighted. A commitment was also made to contribute appropriately to EU capabilities. The harmonization of procurement and the European armaments market was deemed important, with the aim of leveraging the specific capabilities and expertise of all members.[220] The next step was the adoption, on November 5, 2007, of the new National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland. It reflected the changes in the security environment of the Republic of Poland that had occurred since 2003, including Poland's membership in the European Union. The document emphasized its alignment with allied strategies—specifically NATO's Strategic Concept and the European Security Strategy. In the politico-military dimension of security, the North Atlantic Alliance constitutes the primary forum for cooperation for Poland. Strengthening the transatlantic community by deepening relations between the EU and the United States—particularly regarding their cooperation and complementarity in the security sphere—is of great importance. A pivotal role was also assigned to bilateral relations between Poland and the USA. Nevertheless, the new Strategy noted that "EU membership significantly shapes the foundations of Poland's security. It has radically expanded the scope for implementing Polish security policy and enhanced the country's capacity for international influence." Poland's security is increasingly becoming an integral part of EU security.

It is in the interest of the Republic of Poland's security to strengthen the Union's global standing and increase its international engagement at both regional and global levels. A commitment has been made to contribute significantly to the development of EU military and civilian crisis-response capabilities and to gradually increase involvement in establishing European rapid-reaction forces, including through participation in EU battlegroups. Poland is set to provide significant personnel and material contributions to EU-led stabilization, peacekeeping, rescue, and humanitarian missions. In May 2008, a decision was made for Poland to join the Eurocorps and to expand its participation in the structure—which had previously been limited to personnel seconded to the force's headquarters. According to Minister

[220] J. Barcik, Europejska Polityka Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony. Aspekty prawne i polityczne, Bydgoszcz-Katowice 2008, s. 426.

of National Defence Bogdan Klich, Europe is becoming the second pillar of Poland's military security, alongside NATO. The Minister stated, "We are proposing the contribution of one brigade, thereby joining the nations that make up the Eurocorps." The following permanent political-military structures currently operate within the EU, responsible for implementing the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP):

- Political and Security Committee (PSC). This is the primary decision-making body for ongoing ESDP matters. The PSC prepares decisions for the Council of the EU—the highest decision-making body regarding the ESDP—and exercises political oversight over their implementation. Meetings, held twice weekly, are attended by national representatives to the PSC holding the rank of ambassador. The Committee is accountable to the Council of the EU;
- EU Military Committee (EUMC). This is the EU's highest military body, serving as a forum for consultation among member states on military matters. The Committee provides military recommendations to the EU Political and Security Committee. Its work is supported by the EUMC Working Group (EUMCWG). EUMC meetings, held weekly, are attended by military representatives from the member states. In Poland's case, this role is performed by the Chief of the General Staff, who simultaneously serves as the Military Representative to the NATO Military Committee;
- EU Military Staff (EUMS). This body is responsible for strategic planning at the political level and operates under the authority of the EU Military Committee. The Staff includes a Civil-Military Cell tasked with assisting in the planning and conduct of EU crisis response operations, particularly those requiring the coordination of military and civilian capabilities. The Cell is designed to be capable of rapidly establishing an Operations Centre able to independently command a selected operation;
- Political-Military Group (PMG). A working group of the Council of the EU whose primary task is the detailed preparation of documents for approval by the Political and Security Committee. Its meetings take place at the expert level, two to three times a week.[221]

Key decisions regarding the ESDP are taken at EU Council meetings attended by Ministers of Foreign Affairs or Ministers of Defence. Strategic directions for EU cooperation in the field of security and defence are determined unanimously by member states at European Council meetings. This body meets at least twice a year, bringing together heads of state or

[221] R. Zięba, Wspólna polityka…, op. cit., s. 94 – 95.

government. The European Defence Agency (EDA) was established on 12 July 2004 by a Joint Action of the EU Council. Its tasks include:

- developing the defence capabilities of European states;
- strengthening cooperation on defence procurement;
- bolstering the European defence industry and building a European defence equipment market;
- promoting multinational defence research and development programmes.

The Agency is headed by the EU Secretary-General/High Representative for the CFSP. Its activities are overseen by the Ministers of Defence (the Steering Board), while day-to-day management is handled by the Executive Director. Recent years have been significant for the further development of the EU's military dimension. The European Security Strategy was adopted in 2003; it identified terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the issue of "failed" states as key threats to EU security.

A draft Constitutional Treaty was also agreed upon, containing provisions significant for the European Security and Defence Policy (though it was not ratified). Furthermore, a number of initiatives were launched to strengthen defence capabilities at both the European Union and member state levels. These initiatives are primarily intended to improve the coordination of existing national capabilities and to facilitate the implementation of programmes for acquiring new ones (both military and civilian). The creation of EU Battlegroups is one of the most important of these initiatives.[222] EU Battlegroups (BGs) are rapid-response forces contributed by member states for EU operations, capable of carrying out the full spectrum of Petersberg tasks. These units consist of approximately 1,500 troops, are ready for deployment within 15 days, and are capable of independent operations for a period of 30 to 120 days. They may be formed by a single state (national battlegroup) or through the cooperation of several states (multinational battlegroup). Since 2003, the European Union has been conducting the Operation Althea crisis-response mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is the EU's largest mission, serving as a continuation of NATO's Operation SFOR. It involves military and civilian personnel from 22 countries, including 11 non-EU nations. Its objective is to create an environment conducive to the implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Paris Agreement. Key EU tasks include combating organized crime and

[222] R. Kuźniar, Strategia bezpieczeństwa…, op. cit., s. 9 - 28.

assisting local structures in ensuring security. The operation is conducted under the Berlin Plus mechanism, which ensures access to NATO forces and capabilities.[223]

Our participation in the implementation of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) has both political and military dimensions. Poland actively engaged in the development of the ESDP even before formally joining the European Union. Following EU accession, Poland's involvement in the ESDP intensified. Regarding the conceptual aspects of ensuring security, we participated in negotiating key strategic EU documents, including the European Security Strategy (2003) and the provisions of the EU Constitutional Treaty concerning defense policy (2004). In practical terms, as early as 2000, Poland pledged a contribution to the EU Force Catalogue under the European Headline Goal. This contribution currently comprises approximately 1,500 troops and includes two battalions (including the elite 18th Airborne-Assault Battalion), a search-and-rescue group, a transport aircraft, a minesweeper, and a rescue and auxiliary vessel.

Poland has been a member of the European Defence Agency since its inception. The Ministry of Defence played an active role in the Agency's establishment from the very beginning, participating, among other things, in negotiations regarding its founding documents. Polish experts have filled four positions within the EDA (one press officer role and three expert roles). Through participation in European cooperation, membership in the Agency should help strengthen the Polish military's defence capabilities. It should also open up new opportunities for the Polish defence industry, enabling participation in high-tech research and industrial projects. It is reasonable to assume that Poland's involvement in the EDA's activities will enhance the competitiveness of the Polish defence industry's offerings, including those aimed at global markets.

As early as 2004, Poland decided to form a battlegroup jointly with Germany, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Latvia. The group's first period of readiness for EU operations was scheduled for the first half of 2010. During this time, Poland served (for six months) as the framework nation—that is, the state responsible for assembling the group and ensuring the availability of all necessary components (such as logistics support and capabilities for command, communications, reconnaissance, and transport). Poland's participation in EU military and civilian operations serves as a practical test for our armed forces.[224]

[223] Tamże, s. 89 – 94.
[224] R. Zięba, Wspólna polityka…, op. cit., s. 95 - 110.

It must be emphasized that the assurance of various levels of citizen safety is influenced by many factors—ranging from objective conditions to past and present experiences—including the role of mass media, which often portrays and amplifies extreme or unusual events that nonetheless shape public consciousness. The need and desire for safety constitute one of the most significant issues facing individuals and communities at global, local, and personal levels. The pursuit of enhanced safety underpins the promotion of active and safe community living an approach widely adopted since the 1960s. Safety, in its broad sense, is increasingly dependent on the subjective fulfillment of personal safety needs and desires. Ultimately, people do not merely seek political satisfaction, a visible police presence, or loud alarm systems; rather, they desire a reduction in threats and a heightened awareness regarding their own safety.[225] The above observation points to the emergence of new security systems within European and American security structures as well—a development that, for Polish society, signifies a new quality of social life.

4.4. Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its consequences for Polish security strategy

Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine has caused Poland—now a frontline state to completely redefine its defense policy. This has resulted in a rapid increase in defense spending and spurred efforts to strengthen NATO's eastern flank, as well as the adoption of a brand-new stance focused on military deterrence and building national resilience.

The armed attack by the Russian Federation on Ukraine on February 24, 2022, triggered the most serious security crisis in Europe since the end of the Cold War. This event not only transformed the regional security architecture but also impacted the strategic landscape that underpins security and social well-being regarding the functioning of the state and society. The public was acutely aware of Poland's geostrategic position, sharing borders with both Ukraine and Belarus—an ally of the Russian Federation. Poland faced dangers stemming from a military threat on one hand, and from hybrid pressures, cyberattacks, and disinformation campaigns on the other. A serious risk of destabilization emerged for NATO's eastern flank. The significance of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict for Poland's security environment is linked to a multitude of factors. A severe weakening or potential defeat of Ukraine would result in Poland sharing a border with the Russian Federation—an imperial power. Furthermore, the war has given rise to a range of cross-border phenomena, including increased migration

[225] L. Korzeniowski, Securitologia, EAS, Kraków 2008.

flows, intensified activity by foreign intelligence services, sabotage, military provocations, and psychological operations that undermine the state from within.

Another significant factor—and simultaneously a risk—is that the conflict has demonstrated our country's pivotal role in transit operations regarding the military and humanitarian aid provided to Ukraine; this has enhanced Poland's strategic importance while also raising its risk profile. Furthermore, the conflict has necessitated the continuous adjustment of Polish security policy, the strengthening of our defense capabilities and infrastructure resilience, and the deepening of allied cooperation within NATO and the European Union. Poland performs vital tasks within the deterrence and defense system, serving as a key pillar in securing NATO's so-called eastern flank. The war has also highlighted the importance of non-military dimensions of security—such as energy, social, information, and economic security—which constitute elements of the modern battlefield.

Given these circumstances, the Russo-Ukrainian war must be viewed as a serious challenge to Poland's national security environment. The ongoing conflict impacts our security in various ways—geopolitically and militarily, as well as through the lens of hybrid threats and implications for allied cooperation. This analysis highlights the scale of the changes occurring in Europe's security environment and identifies potential courses of action needed to strengthen defense capabilities and build state resilience amidst the rapidly evolving landscape of international security.

The Russian Federation has long sought to regain the status of a global power. Moscow views NATO's eastward expansion as a serious threat to its security. The President of the Russian Federation has repeatedly highlighted the close cultural and historical ties between Ukrainians and Russians, citing a shared past spanning centuries. Russia perceives Ukraine's efforts to integrate with the West as a loss of regional influence, fearing a loss of control over a country that had long remained within its sphere of influence. At the same time, many European states have for years supported Ukraine's aspirations for Euro-Atlantic integration and the strengthening of cooperation with NATO.[226]

Western nations adopted a firm stance in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine by imposing sanctions and simultaneously highlighting differences in political values. On February 24, 2022, Russia launched an attack from multiple directions—including from

[226] C. Mik, Agresja Rosji na Ukrainę i jej konsekwencje dla rządówprawa na poziomie międzynarodowym. Szkic problematyki_, [w:],„Przegląd Prawa i Administracji", t. 130, wrocław 2022, s. 440–469, DOI: 10.34616/145212, [dostęp:7.12.2025],https://repozytorium.uni.wroc.pl/Content/135849/PDF/02_10_C_Mik_Agresja_Rosji_na_Ukraine_i_jej_konsekwencje_dla_rzadow_prawa_na_poziomie_miedzynarodowym.pdf., [dostęp: 7.12.2025]

Belarusian territory—targeting key cities such as Kyiv and Kharkiv; its accusations against Ukraine were dismissed by the international community as disinformation intended to justify the aggression. The Western response was decisive: the European Union, the United States, and other nations imposed economic sanctions on Russia affecting sectors such as energy, finance, and technology. At the same time, military and humanitarian support for Ukraine was stepped up, encompassing arms supplies, medical aid, and the evacuation of civilians.[227]

During this period, the Russian Federation employed unmanned aerial vehicles; however, the attack on Kyiv failed due to a combination of factors, including an overextended front line, insufficient equipment, logistical difficulties, inadequate reconnaissance, and the Ukrainians' staunch and fierce resistance. Consequently, Russian forces were compelled to withdraw from regions such as the Kyiv and Chernihiv oblasts. Conversely, on other sectors of the front, the Russians achieved partial successes by capturing parts of the Kharkiv region and establishing a troop concentration near Izyum—a move that posed a serious threat to the Ukrainian army in the Donbas[228]—though they failed to capture Kharkiv, which was bravely defended through the combined efforts of the army and the civilian population. In the Donbas, Russian forces captured locations including Popasna, Rubizhne, and Lyman, as well as Svitlodarsk and Mariupol. Meanwhile, in southern Ukraine, Russia achieved success by seizing significant areas of the Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions, including the cities of Kherson, Melitopol, and Berdyansk. Factors favoring the Russians included poor defensive preparations and the betrayal by certain officials and SBU officers. However, a vigorous and effective mobilization in Mykolaiv halted the aggressor's advance toward Odesa and successfully prevented Russian forces from executing an amphibious landing on the coast. In the subsequent phase of the war, Russian offensive operations focused on the directions of Kharkiv, Balakliia–Izium–Sloviansk, Siversk–Bakhmut–Avdiivka–Marinka, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson. Despite the aggressive nature and intensity of Russian operations, Ukrainian forces managed to effectively stabilize the front line thanks to their valor and competent command.[229] In late August and early September 2022, Ukraine launched the third phase of the war by initiating a counteroffensive; its strategy centered on weakening Russian forces in key cities, disrupting logistics along the Dnieper, and conducting feint operations near Kherson. The main Ukrainian counterstrike took place in the Kharkiv sector, where they breached the

[227] Publikacja, 10 faktów na temat wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej, https://www.ukrinform.pl/rubric-ato/3830490-10-fakto-w-na-temat-wojny-rosyjskoukrainskiej.html [dostęp: 13.11.2025].
[228] W. Baluk, Pełnoskalowa inwazja Rosji w Ukrainie w latach 2022–2023/2024. Wybrane aspekty militarne, nowa Polityka wschodnia 2024, nr 3 (42), z. 1, Uniwersytet Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2023, s. 41–42.
[229] Ibidem, s. 42–43.

front line and forced Russian troops to retreat; subsequent attacks compelled the Russians to withdraw from the right bank of the Dnieper and abandon Kherson.

Vladimir Putin feigned a willingness to enter into negotiations, attempting in this way to force a reduction in military aid to Ukraine.[230] The next phase of the conflict began in late January and early February 2023 with a Russian offensive aimed at seizing the strategic initiative. According to available sources, by the beginning of 2023, Russia had amassed approximately 320,000 troops (with another 100,000–120,000 in reserve), 1,800 tanks, 3,950 armored vehicles, 2,700 artillery systems, 400 aircraft, and 300 helicopters. Major operations were concentrated in the Donbas sector. Russian forces captured Soledar and attempted to take Bakhmut, which held out for seven months; meanwhile, in the Vuhledar area, Russian troops failed to break through the Ukrainian defenses.

Estimates indicate that Russia has lost over 200,000 troops and Ukraine approximately 100,000, preventing the Russians from launching a broad offensive. Ukraine was gathering its forces and seeking modern weapon systems. NATO nations approved the delivery of tanks (Leopard, Abrams, Challenger) and over 300 infantry fighting vehicles. Preparations were also underway to supply Ukraine with GLSDB missile systems and air defense assets, as well as to train Ukrainian pilots. Ukraine's primary objective in the first half of 2023 was to degrade Russia's military capabilities by inflicting losses in personnel and combat equipment, while also preparing the conditions for a counteroffensive along key strategic axes—specifically in the south and north. Consequently, Ukraine requested increased military support from Western nations, particularly regarding tanks, modern long-range rocket artillery systems, and aircraft. In response to these requests, Alliance member states supplied Ukraine with between 100 and 150 Leopard 2, M1 Abrams, and Challenger 2 tanks, as well as over 300 infantry fighting vehicles, including the AMX-10 RC, Bradley, CV90, Marder, and Stryker. To bolster the capabilities of the Ukrainian Air Force, pilot training programs were launched, and additional air and missile defense systems were provided.[231]

In early 2023, allied nations launched the so-called *tank coalition*, under which Germany and the USA pledged to supply Leopard 2 and M1 Abrams tanks. The United Kingdom subsequently joined the initiative, providing Challenger 2 vehicles. Ukraine received support from Poland in the form of PT-91 tanks and additional Leopard units. In total, Ukraine was supplied with 1,000 units comprising various types of combat vehicles, infantry fighting

[230] J. Markowski, Najgorszy rok wojny, Defence24, 2024, https://defence24.pl/wojna-na-ukrainie-raport-specjalny-defence24/najgorszy-rok-wojny [dostęp: 30.10.2025]
[231] W. Baluk, Pełnoskalowa inwazja Rosji w Ukrainie…, op. cit., s. 46.

vehicles, and armored personnel carriers. This assistance was crucial in boosting Ukraine's military—and consequently defensive—capabilities, while also significantly enhancing its tactical mobility and offensive potential. At the same time, Ukrainian artillery was strengthened through the transfer of approximately 600 artillery systems of various types.[232]

It should be noted that delays in the delivery of weaponry and equipment from Western nations caused significant setbacks in preparations and, consequently, in the conduct of the Ukrainian counteroffensive in the southern sector of the front. This delay was attributed to the need to train military personnel and ready nine brigades for offensive operations. Despite these challenges, Ukraine formed and equipped twelve mechanized brigades designated for the counteroffensive. However, the first two weeks of the operation, conducted with a limited number of units, failed to achieve a breakthrough.[233] The primary obstacles were minefields and a lack of air superiority, which significantly hampered the effectiveness of operations. Consequently, the Ukrainians decided to shift their operational approach, moving to actions carried out by smaller, more flexible tactical groups. This resulted in reduced losses, allowing approximately 80% of their offensive potential to be preserved. Eventually, Ukraine managed to breach the first Russian line of defense near Robotyne. However, Ukrainian forces faced subsequent enemy counterattacks, which prevented them from rapidly advancing the offensive. It is worth noting that, as a result of the offensive, Ukraine regained approximately 250 km² of territory in the Velyka Novosilka and Robotyne areas, as well as 72 km² during the Bakhmut operation.[234]

Estimates indicate that during the two years of the conflict, 50,000–70,000 Ukrainian troops have been killed and 100,000–120,000 wounded. Although Russia's losses in personnel and equipment are higher, it still retains significant combat capability. It must be emphasized that systematic support from Western nations remains fundamental to the effectiveness of Ukraine's military operations and to our own sense of security. The estimated value of the military, financial, and humanitarian aid provided to Ukraine stands at $178 billion and continues to rise. Given the casualties sustained, the importance of this assistance in maintaining Ukraine's defense capabilities cannot be overstated. The protracted conflict between the Russian Federation and Ukraine requires not only the continuation but also the intensification of supplies of equipment, weaponry, and ammunition.

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[232] Agresja Rosji na Ukrainę, Raport o stanie świata, podcast, https://raportostanieswiata.pl/w-powiekszeniu/agresja-rosji-na-ukraine/ [dostęp: 29.10.2025].
[233] L. Pinczak, Wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska – kampania 2022 r. Przebieg i następstwa, Uniwersytet warszawski, warszawa 2023, s. 391.
[234] M. Fiszer, J. Fiszer, Wojna w Ukrainie. Od napaści do kontrofensywy, warszawa 2022, e-book

4.5. The geopolitical role and significance of Ukraine in the context of Poland's security

Ukraine's geopolitical role is of great importance to Poland's security, as an independent Ukraine serves as a crucial buffer, separating Poland from the direct military threat posed by the Russian Federation. Analysis of Ukraine's current situation focuses primarily on charting a development path amidst rapidly changing geopolitical conditions. The challenge lies not merely in choosing a direction for development, but above all in defining a modern strategy that takes into account the country's specific social, cultural, and political circumstances. Currently, Ukrainian concepts regarding the country's civilizational path encompass several potential avenues for development, such as:[235]

• the European path – striving for integration with the European Union, with a focus on economic cooperation and legal modernization;

• the Euro-Atlantic direction – full integration with NATO to ensure security and Alliance membership;

• a national policy – centered on building a distinct civilizational hub by combining Eastern and Western influences; however, it must be noted that this approach unfortunately carries a risk of isolation;

• the Eurasian path – currently not very attractive from a political or military standpoint, yet possessing economic potential through cooperation with Eurasian states.

The analyses presented in this study largely demonstrate that Ukraine's significance to the security policy of the Republic of Poland stems from a fundamental factor: the fact that both states belong to the same geostrategic region. This naturally gives rise to a multidimensional security interdependence between them, a relationship that takes on particular importance due to the strong influence of purely military aspects. It is worth recalling that a geostrategic region is defined as a specific land, maritime, or land-maritime area (including the associated airspace) where political, economic, or military events significantly shape the prevailing international situation within that region. The security situation in a geostrategic context directly affects the capacity and effectiveness of individual states in implementing their own strategies within their respective geopolitical spheres. Consequently, this situation must be regarded as a key factor determining the ability of a state to achieve

[235] A. Kozłowska, Zewnętrzny wymiar ukraińskiego rozdroża – geopolityczne znaczenie Ukrainy oraz koncepcje ukraińskiej polityki zagranicznej [w:] Wybrane problemy badań wschodnich, red. G. tokarz, w. Baluk, z. J. winnicki, wyd. Arboretum, warszawa 2007, s. 215–216.

its established security objectives.[236] The scope of a geostrategic region is shaped primarily by five key factors. The strength of their influence determines the region's boundaries, the nature of the relationships connecting its parts, and the factors driving those connections. For the Central European Geostrategic Region (CEGR), the most significant factors are political, geographical, cultural, economic, and military. Among these, the military factor exerts the greatest influence on relations between the states in this area and on the region's actual boundaries. Consequently, issues related to military security serve as the primary reference point for analyzing processes within the CEGR. The Central European Geostrategic Region spans an area extending from the Rhine in the west to the eastern borders of the former USSR states (the Baltic states, Belarus, and Ukraine) in the east, and from the southern reaches of the Baltic Sea basin to the Danube in the north-south direction. It encompasses fifteen states: Belarus, Denmark, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Germany, Austria, the Czech Republic, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, Hungary, and Russia (due to the Kaliningrad Oblast). This region borders three other geopolitical regions: Eastern Europe, Northwestern Europe, and the Mediterranean. This implies that the constituent states differ in terms of their political, economic, social, and military potential. Furthermore, they operate within distinct organizational, political, and economic structures—such as the European Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, or the Eurasian Economic Union. It must be noted that the alliance between Belarus and Russia is of paramount importance in the context of security—including military and quasi-military security (NATO) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. The North Atlantic Alliance and the structures subordinate to the Russian Federation hold particular significance. Given the current geostrategic situation in Central and Eastern Europe, these entities are antagonistic toward one another. Moreover, since 2014, we have observed not merely persistent but actually escalating animosity and a drive toward confrontation—attitudes that, in the case of Russia's stance, amount to open hostility.[237]

Issues concerning Ukraine occupy a significant place in the security strategy of the Republic of Poland, a fact stemming from political, economic, and—naturally—military considerations. It is highly significant that both Poland and Ukraine belong to Central and Eastern Europe; this naturally shapes the shared needs and challenges involved in constructing the security architecture. The nature of Polish-Ukrainian security relations depends on three

[236] L. Sykulski, Europa środkowa jako region geostrategiczny w myśli geopolitycznej geografów wojskowych z akademii obrony narodowej w Warszawie, „Przegląd geopolityczny", t. 6, 2013, s. 98.
[237] A. Drzewicki, Ukraina w polityce bezpieczeństwa Polski. przegląd uwarunkowań po 2014 r., Uniwersytet wrocławski, Wrocław 2018, s. 86–87.

key factors. Ukraine's security and political stability directly affect the situation in Central Europe—a region with which Poland is strategically closely linked—meaning that any potential political or economic crises in Ukraine have immediate consequences for Poland's national security system. Another important aspect is the process of Ukraine drawing closer to European and Euro-Atlantic structures. The potential success of this process would allow Poland to distance itself from an area of instability and move toward the core of the security zone, thereby minimizing the pressure associated with its role as a frontline state. Current events in Ukraine—linked to the ongoing conflict with the Russian Federation as well as the country's trajectory toward integration or isolation—present both threats and opportunities for Poland's security. On the one hand, this offers the prospect of gaining a stable ally, strengthening defense cooperation, and creating an effective barrier against potential threats from Russia; on the other, there is a real risk that the conflict could persist or escalate, creating an unstable buffer zone that would negatively impact regional security.

Poland's policy towards Ukraine requires a balanced strategy that, on the one hand, supports the necessary integration processes and reforms in Ukraine while strengthening its defense capabilities and potential for international cooperation. It is therefore crucial to prepare for less optimistic scenarios involving persistent instability that could directly impact our country's security environment.[238] Ukraine's geopolitical significance for Poland stems from our shared location in Central and Eastern Europe. While Ukraine's integration with Western nations could bolster Poland's security, the conflict within Ukraine significantly heightens the level of military risk and regional instability. Ukraine plays a pivotal role in the Russian Federation's imperial ambitions, and Ukrainian-Russian relations are equally critical to Poland's national security environment.

Zbigniew Brzeziński is convinced that without Ukraine, Russia loses the ability to restore its status as a great power in Eurasia. Therefore, the actions Russia takes regarding Ukraine—aimed at reintegrating the post-Soviet space and building a sphere of influence—directly affect Poland's stability and security.[239] The strategic outlook for Ukraine presents two potential scenarios with opposing consequences for Poland. The first involves Ukraine becoming a buffer state, which would entail persistent instability and threats along Poland's eastern borders. The second scenario—successful integration of Ukraine into Euro-Atlantic structures—would significantly enhance Poland's strategic security by stabilizing the situation

[238] Ibidem, s. 85.
[239] K. Borkowski, Znaczenie polityki zagranicznej Ukrainy dla bezpieczeństwa Polski, Krakowska Akademia im. Andrzeja Frycza-Modrzewskiego wydział nauk o Bezpieczeństwie, Kraków 2021, s. 91–95.

beyond its eastern border. The armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine that began in 2022 has profoundly impacted security in Central and Eastern Europe. As a neighbor to both Ukraine and Belarus, and a member of NATO and the EU, Poland has found itself in a situation requiring flexibility and adaptation to new challenges and threats. Poland has been compelled to redefine its security approach, taking into account factors such as the risk of border incidents, migration pressure, cyberattacks, disinformation, and energy-related pressure. Currently, the primary challenges include strengthening defense capabilities, modernizing the military, securing borders, developing crisis management systems, and integrating civil and military resources. Furthermore, cooperation within NATO and active participation in allied operations are crucial for effectively countering threats from the Russian Federation in both the military and information domains. The escalation of the Russia-Ukraine war poses one of the greatest threats to Poland's internal security environment. Although hostilities have thus far been confined largely to Ukrainian territory, any further expansion of the conflict could increase the risk of destabilization within Poland itself. Such a scenario would entail not only the threat of direct border incidents but also the possibility of the use of military force against other NATO states, including Poland. Should events take such a turn, it would necessitate invoking Article 5 of the Washington Treaty and activating allied defense mechanisms.[240]

As part of NATO's eastern flank, Poland plays a significant role in the Alliance's deterrence and defense system. Consequently, it is a potential target for Russian destabilization efforts, particularly regarding psychological warfare, the testing of response capabilities, and border provocations. Incidents occurring in 2023 and 2024—such as airspace violations by Russian-origin missiles or drones—demonstrate that the risk of local escalation and the uncontrolled expansion of the conflict is real.[241]

Poland must be prepared to respond to these threats by maintaining combat readiness, developing early warning systems, and intensifying cooperation with allied partners. It is a matter of vital national interest for Poland to continuously develop capabilities in reconnaissance, air defense, and countering asymmetric threats—which could form part of a Russian strategy to test NATO's cohesion. Systems such as Patriot and the planned deployment of deterrence capabilities play a crucial role in ensuring control of the airspace and enabling a rapid response to military incidents occurring in border areas or near strategic sites.

[240] Traktat Północnoatlantycki sporządzony w Waszyngtonie dnia 4 kwietnia 1949 r., Dz.U. 2000 nr 87 poz. 970, art. 5.
[241] M. A. Piotrowski, Perspektywy zagrożenia nowymi zdolnościami rakietowymi i nuklearnymi Rosji, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, nr 184 (2994), 10/2024, s. 1–2.

In light of the potential risk of military escalation, Poland is systematically strengthening its defense capabilities. A key aspect of this strategy is the modernization of the Polish Armed Forces, carried out under the 2022 Act on the Defense of the Homeland. This Act provides for, among other things, increasing the size of the army, acquiring modern military equipment (including Abrams tanks, HIMARS systems, and F-35 aircraft), and expanding the Territorial Defense Forces. Expanding military infrastructure remains a vital element of the modernization process—both at the national level and through joint investments with NATO, such as logistics bases and the missile defense system located in Redzikowo. These efforts encompass the construction and modernization of arms depots, training centers, landing strips, and logistics facilities designed to ensure the efficient reception of allied forces in the event of a crisis. A network of so-called logistics hubs is being developed in Eastern Poland, serving as key transshipment and supply points for NATO operations. Poland is committed to providing the infrastructure necessary for the rapid deployment and effective functioning of Allied forces under contingency plans.

The ongoing military escalation of the conflict could also place increased pressure on Poland's civil defense and crisis management systems. It is essential to consider the need to protect the civilian population in the event of a threat from missile strikes. Logistical and humanitarian challenges may also arise, stemming from potential internal displacement and a continued influx of refugees. In this context, it is necessary to ensure that local government structures, emergency services, and public institutions are prepared to operate under the threat of war. At the same time, efforts must be made to educate the public and build citizens' psychological resilience to crisis situations.[242] Increasing pressure on civil protection systems amidst military escalation necessitates the provision of adequate material resources—such as shelters, medical supplies, and evacuation points—as well as the development of clear crisis response procedures at both local and national levels. The current state of preparedness among civil administrative structures, particularly regarding a potential high-intensity conflict, highlights the need to revise and supplement existing crisis management plans and to test them under simulated threat conditions.

From a geostrategic perspective, one must also consider the possibility of an aggressor attempting to destabilize the Baltic states, which would indirectly impact Poland's own security environment. In a crisis scenario, Poland would serve as a key logistical corridor for NATO military support destined for the region. This scenario is already reflected in NATO operational

[242] W. Kitler, Bezpieczeństwo narodowe RP. Podstawy systemowe, warszawa 2020, s. 31

plans and in military exercises—such as Defender Europe and Anakonda—designed to test the capability for the rapid deployment of troops and assets.[243] In the event of a military crisis in the Baltic states—such as Lithuania, Latvia, or Estonia—Poland would serve as the primary land link between Western Europe and NATO's eastern flank, specifically via the *Suwałki Gap*. Military experts consider this narrow strip of territory, bordering Russia (the Kaliningrad Oblast) and Belarus, to be one of the most critical strategic points in Europe; its loss or blockade could cut the Baltic states off from the Alliance's land-based support. This makes Poland a country of key operational and logistical importance. In response to such threats, the Alliance has developed and updated defense plans that provide for the rapid deployment of troops to Poland and the Baltic states in the event of a potential threat. Consequently, Poland is required to ensure adequate infrastructure, transport, and logistical capabilities—such as sufficient road and rail capacity, the ability to receive heavy military equipment, and logistical support facilities for rotational Allied forces.[244] To achieve this goal, investments are being made in the development of so-called dual-use infrastructure, enabling both civilian and military application during times of peace and crisis. Against the backdrop of the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war, the concept of hybrid conflict has taken on particular significance—especially regarding the security environment of countries neighboring the zone of hostilities, such as Poland.

In the relevant literature, the concept of hybrid conflict is defined as a form of military and non-military engagement that combines diverse methods of influence—ranging from overt, conventional military operations to covert, non-kinetic means of pressure. A characteristic feature of hybrid conflict is its multidimensional nature and the blurring of boundaries between war and peace, as well as between aggressor and victim. Such a definition makes it difficult to unequivocally assign responsibility for destabilizing actions.[245] This strategy involves not only the use of regular armed forces but also relies on tools such as cyberattacks against state and energy infrastructure, information manipulation and disinformation in the media and online, migration pressure orchestrated by third countries, psychological operations aimed at intimidating the population, intelligence and sabotage activities, and the support or instigation of separatist movements. Such actions aim to systematically weaken an adversary's state structures, destabilize its social and economic order, sow chaos, and undermine public

[243] NATO Exercise "Defender Europe 24" Overview, nAtO Press Office, 2024, https://nato.int [dostęp: 11.11.2025].
[244] R. Parafinowicz, The Military-Geographical Significance of the Suwałki Gap, war Studies University, Warsaw 2017, s. 4.
[245] NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, Hybrid Threats: A Strategic Communications Perspective, https:// stratcomcoe.org [dostęp: 17.10.2025]

trust in state institutions—all without a formal declaration of war and often under a veneer of legality or perpetrator anonymity. Modern hybrid conflicts therefore represent not only a military challenge but also a test of the resilience of political, information, economic, and social systems. Given this context, states such as Poland—situated on the eastern flank of NATO and the European Union—must prepare not only for conventional military threats but also for unconventional actions carried out by state and non-state actors in a covert and dispersed manner. The threat posed to Poland by hybrid conflicts intensified significantly after 2021, driven by a deliberately orchestrated migration crisis on the border with Belarus. With the support of the Russian Federation, the Belarusian regime organized the transport of migrants from the Middle East and Africa, directing them toward the external borders of the European Union—specifically those of Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia. Migrants were flown in with the involvement of Belarusian special services and subsequently directed to border crossings.[246] These actions were carried out by leveraging orchestrated migratory pressure—a form of hybrid aggression. Their primary objective was to destabilize the border, disrupt the internal order of the affected states, test their institutional responses, and undermine European Union cohesion regarding migration and security policies. Furthermore, alongside these physical actions, a disinformation campaign was conducted across social and traditional media, aiming to portray Poland as a state that violates human rights and employs inhumane measures against migrants. Analyses and studies conducted by NATO, Frontex, and other expert bodies consistently identified this as a hybrid operation—part of a Russian-Belarusian strategy to destabilize the Central and Eastern European region. It must be emphasized that these actions, which served as a test of the resilience of EU border structures and law enforcement agencies, could, in the long term, pave the way for further, more complex hybrid operations.

As this crisis escalates, so does the likelihood of further hybrid actions directed against our state. Analyses conducted by security centers and international institutions indicate that Poland—as a border state and a member of NATO's eastern flank—will continue to be a target of intense unconventional operations carried out by various actors acting in the interests of the Russian Federation.[247] Among the real threats, one must not overlook cyberattacks targeting critical infrastructure, public institutions, and the private sector. Such attacks aim to destroy or paralyze control systems—such as those managing power grids, water supply networks,

[246] Consultative Forum Annual Report 2021, https://www.frontex.europa.eu/assets/Partners/Consultative_Forum_files/ CF_Annual_Report_2021.pdf. [dostęp: 7.12.2025].

[247] F. Bryjka, Rosyjskie działania dywersyjne wobec państw NATO, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Biuletyn nr 112 (2922), warszawa 2024, s. 6.

or public transport—or they may involve disinformation, data theft, and the falsification or modification of data to incite fear, anxiety, and information chaos. Coordinated DDoS attacks, phishing campaigns targeting government officials, and attacks on hospitals and local government bodies have already occurred.[248]

Other types of threats include organized disinformation campaigns aimed at polarizing society, undermining trust in state institutions and NATO, and spreading panic or defeatism amidst the ongoing conflict beyond the eastern border. Disinformation can take various forms, such as fake news on social media, manipulated video footage (deepfakes), analyses by pseudo-experts, or the creation of ostensibly local news portals that disseminate narratives aligned with Russia's interests.[249] Furthermore, there are acts of sabotage—such as the deliberate damaging of energy infrastructure, railway networks, or transmission stations—that may be carried out by sleeper agent networks, externally inspired non-state actors, or so-called "little green men" (irregular forces operating without state insignia). Such actions have been observed in Moldova and Georgia, for instance, and more recently in the Czech Republic and Bulgaria as well.[250]

The multidimensional nature, unpredictability, and harmful impact of these threats require Poland to build broad-based systemic resilience, encompassing not only technical measures, cyber-defense systems, and information monitoring but also legislative, educational, and operational tools. Capabilities for the early detection of threats, international cooperation on intelligence sharing, and a coherent national information strategy are also crucial. As a member of NATO and the European Union, Poland possesses numerous tools to counter hybrid threats; however, this requires the systematic strengthening of national resilience. Above all, it is essential to develop domestic cybersecurity capabilities—for instance, through infrastructure investment, specialist training, and support for institutions such as CERT Polska and the NCBC. Combating disinformation is of critical importance, involving the monitoring of the information space, immediate responses to false information, and public media literacy education. To raise citizen awareness regarding hybrid threats, educational campaigns and training sessions on recognizing and responding to information manipulation must be conducted. Furthermore, strengthening international cooperation—with NATO and EU partners as well as specialized analytical and intelligence centers—is essential.[251]

[248] CERT Polska, Raport roczny o stanie bezpieczeństwa cyberprzestrzeni RP w 2022 roku, warszawa 2023, s. 74.
[249] Euvs Disinfo, Disinformation Cases and Narratives in Central and Eastern Europe, https://euvsdisinfo.eu [dostęp: 17.10.2025]
[250] NATO Review, Hybrid Threats in the Eastern Flank, https://www.nato.int [dostęp: 17.10.2025]
[251] Biuro Bezpieczeństwa narodowego, Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, warszawa 2014, s. 49.

Amidst rising international tensions caused by the war in Ukraine, our country plays a vital role on NATO's eastern flank. Poland's membership in the Alliance is the cornerstone of our national security, particularly in light of the ongoing war and the aggressive policies of the Russian Federation. Closely monitoring Russia's actions, NATO is reinforcing the presence of Allied troops in the region, including in Poland. The Alliance's 2022 Strategic Concept identifies Russia as the primary threat, while Article 5 of the Washington Treaty forms the basis for collective defense. US and British troops are stationed in Poland, alongside deployed defense systems and logistical infrastructure. Poland participates in multinational exercises and hosts the US Army V Corps headquarters. Developing defense infrastructure and ensuring interoperability with Allied forces are top priorities. Cooperation with the US—the primary security guarantor—is crucial, and the presence of American troops bolsters both the sense of security and Poland's standing in the region. NATO's efforts regarding cybersecurity and countering disinformation are also fundamental to our security. Poland utilizes NATO's rapid response and information-sharing mechanisms, while the Alliance continuously updates and adapts its strategies—including mobilization plans—to the rapidly evolving security environment and adjusts the size of its rapid response forces.

In summary, the presence of NATO and its allies in Poland is crucial for security and stability in Central and Eastern Europe. Poland not only benefits from allied protection but also actively contributes to the region's collective security.

CONCLUSIONS

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict represents a pivotal turning point for Poland's security system, revealing not only current threats to the state's security environment but also highlighting the need for a profound adaptation of defense policy and the state's response strategies to the rapidly evolving spectrum of modern threats. Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine has underscored the pace of change within Poland's surroundings and the security architecture of Central and Eastern Europe. Poland's position as a border state and a key component of NATO's eastern flank demands not only heightened activity and vigilance but also the implementation of long-term measures aimed at building optimal national resilience against military, hybrid, and information threats.

Analyses and examinations of the research material indicate that the war in Ukraine has significantly heightened the risk level for Poland's security environment. This is evidenced by Russia's hostile actions and emerging threats of military escalation, as well as intensifying hybrid pressure—including cyberattacks, disinformation, migration pressure, and acts

of sabotage targeting critical infrastructure. The Russian Federation's imperial aspirations suggest that its current military aggression is not only aimed at the sovereignty of Ukraine as an independent state but may also be part of a broader strategy to subjugate other nations, including Poland.

To destabilize the information environment and undermine public trust in state institutions and bodies, the Russian Federation employs hybrid tactics against Poland, thereby testing the resilience of Polish security structures and crisis management systems. Consequently, Poland must strengthen its defense capabilities, accelerate the modernization of its military potential, enhance cyber resilience and intelligence effectiveness, and continuously improve the public administration's preparedness for various escalation attempts. Analyses also highlight the vital role of NATO as a guarantor of our security, as well as the importance of the presence of Allied troops. Further expansion of military infrastructure and ensuring interoperability with Alliance forces are essential. Investments in air and missile defense systems—which form the foundation of effective deterrence—are crucial. At the same time, we should continue cooperation and strengthen good relations with Ukraine, the Baltic states, and all other nations in our region. Only through joint efforts and coherent strategies can we enhance our resilience and elevate our capacity to respond to threats originating from Russia.

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has served as a catalyst and a turning point for our country regarding the mindset and perception of Poland's national security. It highlighted the necessity of a broad, multidimensional approach to state security—one that integrates various elements, including military, political, energy, economic, and social dimensions—in light of the situation unfolding beyond our eastern border. Poland faces a significant challenge that entails not only building societal resilience but also investing in shaping public awareness regarding the realities of the modern security environment and its associated threats, as well as promoting security education. In today's world, security is not based solely on military potential; rather, it depends on the comprehensive capabilities and resilience of the state as a whole. Our country's security is influenced by developments in Ukraine, dynamic changes in the international arena, and the state's effectiveness in building resilience and defense capabilities in response to these conditions.

The armed conflict in Ukraine has shattered the assumption that large-scale wars in Europe were unrealistic. The Russian Federation has been explicitly identified as a direct and long-term threat to Poland's territorial integrity. It is worth noting that the Polish government

is making efforts to strengthen its defense capabilities and build alliances. There has also been a dramatic increase in the defense budget: Poland currently allocates 4.7% of its GDP to technical modernization and the procurement of modern weaponry. The North Atlantic Alliance has become the cornerstone of collective defense, and the presence of Allied troops on Polish soil has steadily increased. Military and logistical aid to Ukraine is viewed as a matter of Polish national interest and a means of establishing a buffer zone. **Thanks to its location**, Ukraine ensures our military and territorial security and **creates a so-called buffer zone, preventing Russia from directly approaching Poland's eastern border**. Moreover, Ukrainian forces are degrading the Russian army's conventional capabilities and giving Poland time to expand and modernize its own armed forces. A stable **Ukraine also relieves pressure on the northeastern flank and limits Russia's freedom of maneuver from Belarus**. When considering the **regional security architecture in the context of NATO's eastern flank, it must be stated that** Ukraine's success strengthens the defensive posture of the entire North Atlantic Alliance. It must also be emphasized that the integration of Ukraine with Western nations—and its pursuit of membership in NATO and EU structures—is of crucial importance, as this shifts the zone of stability and security eastward. The support Poland provides to Ukraine bolsters our country's political standing as a key regional actor. Furthermore, a secure Ukraine checks Russian dominance in the Black Sea, thereby reinforcing stability across Central and Eastern Europe. It is essential to underscore the dangers we would face from the Russian Federation should it emerge victorious in the war against Ukraine. Potential threats include asymmetric and infrastructure-related risks, such as:

- **hybrid warfare** – a takeover of Ukraine by the Russian Federation would lead to a catastrophic increase in migratory pressure and cyberattacks against Poland;
- **refugee crisis** – Ukraine's internal stability significantly reduces the risk of sudden waves of migration;
- **energy security** – Ukraine holds Europe's largest underground gas reserves, which are vital for regional stability;
- **critical infrastructure** – key transport routes connecting Europe and Asia run through Ukrainian territory.

Chapter V

EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES IN POLAND'S NATIONAL SECURITY SYSTEM

5.1. Architecture of the State Security System

Ensuring security at the state level is defined by an efficiently functioning security system. The architecture of the Polish national security system, as outlined in the current National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland of 2020, includes a command subsystem composed of state authorities and decision-making bodies, as well as executive subsystems, including operational subsystems and support subsystems[252]. In general, the national security system of a state is composed of all bodies and institutions responsible for security belonging to the executive, legislative, judicial and local authorities[253].

The first and fundamental element of the national security system is the command subsystem. It consists of public authorities and heads of organizational units. Their primary responsibility is to perform national security tasks with the effective participation of advisory bodies and administrative bodies, as well as using infrastructure appropriate to the situation. The foundation for the operation of this subsystem is considered to be the stable principles of the political system. The primary role in the command subsystem belongs to the Parliament of the Republic of Poland, the President of the Republic of Poland, and the Council of Ministers. The command subsystem is fundamental to the entire national security system in times of peace, crisis, and war. It ensures the acquisition and analysis of threat information, planning the preparation and operation of other subsystems, and managing (commanding) them during operations. Therefore, four strategic areas of the command subsystem's tasks can be identified:

1) monitoring threats (taking into account their scale, type, and location);

2) preventing the emergence of threats (both within the country and abroad);

3) preventing the emergence of threats (both within and outside its borders); 3) actions related to removing the effects of disasters (when they could not be prevented);

4) directing the state's defense in the event of direct military aggression.

[252] https://zpe.gov.pl/a/system-bezpieczenstwa-narodowego---ogolna-charakterystyka/D10Rh2ZnC

[253] System bezpieczeństwa narodowego – ogólna charakterystyka, https://www.zsoiz-czyzew.pl/pliki/2019-2020/korona/1Tia-edukacjadlabezpieczenstwa.pdf, data dostępu 02.06.2021.

Poland's national security system is as follows:

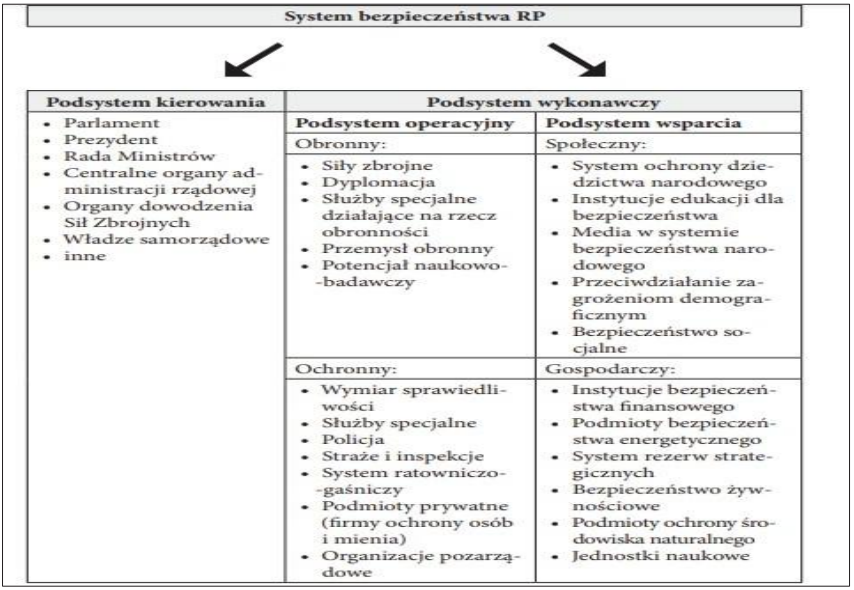


Fig. 5 National security diagram. Source: M. Gikiewicz, K. Jarzynka, *Analysis of the competences of the President of the Republic of Poland and the Council of Ministers in the field of security management, Scientific Papers of the Main School of Fire Service* 2018, No. 65 (VOL. 1)/1/2018, Warsaw 2018, p. 129.

It should be emphasized that the main area of operation of the subsystem is crisis management. Pursuant to Article 2 of the Crisis Management Act […], crisis management is the activity of public administration bodies that is an element of national security management, which involves preventing crisis situations, preparing to take control of them through planned actions, responding to the occurrence of crisis situations, and restoring infrastructure or restoring its original character[254]. The subsequent articles of the Act designate the authorities responsible for crisis management and define their tasks and responsibilities. The crisis management system in Poland is described as multi-level and consists of the following components:

1) crisis management authorities,

2) consultative and advisory bodies responsible for initiating

[254] Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 8 października 2020 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o zarządzaniu kryzysowym, Dz.U.2020.1856

and coordinating crisis management actions,

3) crisis management centers, maintaining 24-hour readiness to take action[255].

Tabela 2. System Zarządzania kryzysowego w Polsce

SYSTEM ZARZĄDZANIA KRYZYSOWEGO			
Szczebel administra-cyjny	**Organy zarządzania kryzysowego**	**Organy opiniodawczo doradcze**	**Centra Zarządzania Kryzysowego**
Krajowy	Rada Ministrów, Prezes Rady Ministrów	Rządowy Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Rządowe Centrum Bezpieczeństwa
Resortowy	Minister kierujący działem administracji rządowej, Kierownik organu centralnego	Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego (ministerstwa, urzędu centralnego)	Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego (ministerstwa, urzędu centralnego)
Wojewódzki	Wojewoda	Wojewódzki Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Wojewódzkie Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego
Powiatowy	Starosta powiatu	Powiatowy Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Powiatowe Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego
Gminny	Wójt, Burmistrz, Prezydent miasta	Gminny Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Mogą być tworzone (nie ma obowiązku utworzenia) gminne (miejskie) centra zarządzania kryzysowego

source: Government Security Centre, https://www.gov.pl/web/rcb, access date: April 1, 2021.

The functioning of the Government Security Centre is the most important element of the management subsystem. The Government Security Centre is responsible for providing the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers, and the Government Crisis Management Team with the necessary support in the decision-making process regarding broadly understood security by providing substantive studies and analyses obtained through continuous monitoring of the situation in the country[256]. The aim, mission and main task of the Government Security Centre is also to carry out a full analysis of threats based on data from all possible "crisis centers" operating within the public administration and on the basis of information obtained from international partners[257]. An important role of the RCB is to act as a coordinator in the flow of information about threats[258]. The position and importance of the GCB in the management subsystem is underpinned by its effectiveness, based on the possession,

[255] W. Walczak, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe − rola i zadania organów administracji państwowej*, Przedsiębiorczość i zarządzanie, t. X , Z. 8, Łódź 2009, ss. 98-99.
[256] G. Pietrek, M. Stefański, *Wyzwania bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, Gdańsk 2018, ss. 38-39.
[257] J. Zych, *Organizacje bezpieczeństwa publicznego wobec wyzwań zarządzania kryzysowego w Polsce*, Warszawa 2020, ss. 43-44.
[258] Rozporządzenie Prezesa Rady Ministrów z dnia 10 lipca 2008 r. w sprawie organizacji i trybu działania Rządowego Centrum Bezpieczeństwa, Dz. U. z dnia 18 lipca 2008 r.

processing, and, above all, effective use of information, which forms the basis for effective crisis management activities and ensures the state's defense readiness. The GCB's role in "civil planning" is also crucial for the functioning of society, resulting in the collection of information on the forces and resources necessary to counteract and mitigate the effects of threats. This function has a real impact on the process of preparing public administration bodies for crisis management[259].

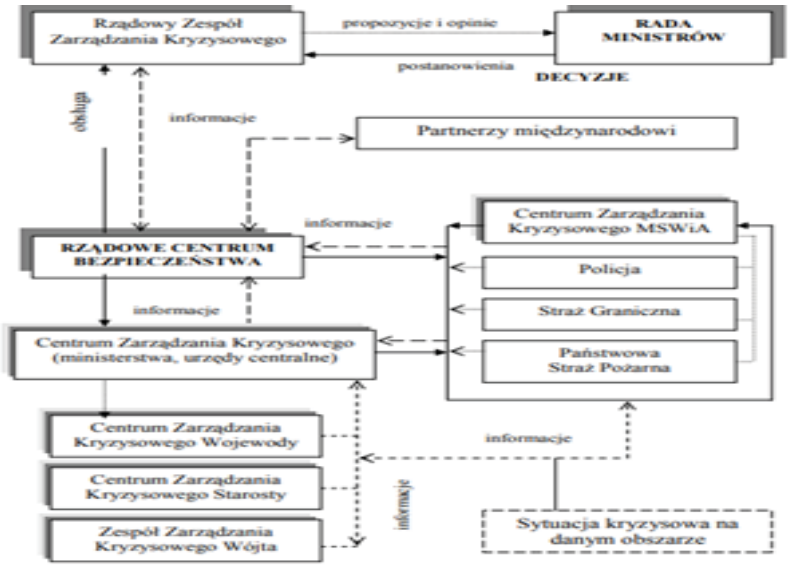


Fig. 6. *Information flow between crisis management structures and bodies source:* https://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/9498/Zarz%20dzanie%20kryzysowe%20%20rola%20i%20zadania%20organów%20administracji%20pa%20stwowej.pdf?sequence=1, accessed April 1, 2021.

In the event of a crisis, public administration tasks should be carried out in accordance with the fundamental principles of crisis management in the state. These principles include:

1. The principle of territorial primacy – this model recognizes the territorial structure of the state as the fundamental structure of this model and reduces the sectoral structure (national, ministerial, provincial, district, and municipal levels) to a subsidiary function.

2. Single-person management – decisions are made and accounted for by a single person (prime minister, minister, provincial governor, district head, mayor, mayor).

[259] W. Otwinowski, *Kryzys i sytuacja kryzysowa*, Przegląd Naukowo-Metodyczny, Edukacja dla Bezpieczeństwa nr 2, Poznań 2010, s.88.

3. The principle of public authority responsibility – public authorities assume the authority and responsibility for decision-making in crisis situations.
4. The principle of unification – granting administrative authorities general authority to ensure the fulfillment of their responsibilities.
5. The principle of threat categorization – this involves dividing threats into groups by type and size and assigning them specific legal, organizational, and financial solutions. 6. Principle of universality - crisis management is organized by public authorities in cooperation with existing specialized institutions and organizations, as well as the general public[260].

At this point, it seems necessary to enumerate the specific competences of state authorities within the management system of the national security system. The Sejm's competences with respect to the national security system are manifested in the functions performed by this body in the political system of the Republic of Poland, i.e., legislative, supervisory, and creative functions. These functions include:

- enacting laws in the broadly understood field of national security;
- shaping security policy;
- defining by statute the principles for limiting human and civil rights and freedoms;
- deciding on a state of war and the conclusion of peace on behalf of the President;
- approving or revoking a Presidential regulation declaring a state of emergency or martial law;
- expressing consent to the extension of a state of emergency or a state of natural disaster;
- supervising the operational subsystems of the national security system (armed forces, police, special services, and other services); □ authorizing the President, by statute, to ratify or terminate certain international agreements;
- exercising the power to appoint commissions of inquiry[261].

When analyzing the nature of the Sejm's functions, it should be emphasized that they largely relate to the area of legal regulations introduced under specific conditions, the main task of which is to create and maintain the most favorable legal order in specific, often crisis-like, circumstances. The competences of another entity in the security system, the Senate, in the field of national security, stem from the functions performed by this body in the political system of the Republic of Poland and are identical to the functions of the Sejm. In fulfilling its legislative function, the Senate of the Republic of Poland has the real ability to influence the

[260] J. Bagiński, Nowe zarządzanie kryzysowe w praktyce, Poznań 2008, s. 9.
261 Tamże.

state system and amend the current constitution. The Senate does not have the function of passing laws; its task is to initiate the legislative process and, above all, to provide opinions on laws passed by the Sejm. The Senate also has the authority to grant consent to the President's calling of national referenda on matters of particular importance to the state, which may also concern issues directly related to national security. The Senate's oversight function is not direct. It may conduct inspections or formulate conclusions regarding deficiencies and necessary changes. In this regard, the Marshal of the Senate or 30 senators may submit a motion to the Constitutional Tribunal to determine: the conformity of statutes and international agreements with the Constitution, or the coherence and compliance of statutes with ratified international agreements (the ratification of which required prior consent granted by statute), the conformity of legal provisions issued by central state authorities with the Constitution, ratified international agreements and statutes, and the conformity of the purposes or activities of political parties with the Constitution[262].

Within the framework of ensuring security and crisis management, which should be considered crucial in this process, executive subsystems also play a role. These are forces and resources intended to carry out tasks in the area of national security, at the disposal of security management bodies. In practice, they are divided into operational subsystems (defense and protection) and support subsystems (social and economic). Operational subsystems are designed to seize opportunities, address challenges, reduce risks, and counteract threats of a political, military, and non-military nature. The defense subsystem comprises the armed forces, while the protection subsystems include, for example, the justice system, secret services, and rescue services. The social and economic subsystems support and complement the operational subsystems with their capabilities and resources, which include, for example, security education institutions and financial security institutions. Based on the function of the Senate, it can be concluded that it is an entity whose main role is to issue opinions and point out possible errors in laws concerning, in this case, issues related to state security.

5.2. Tasks and Competencies of the Executive Branches - the Role of the President of the Republic of Poland in the National Security System

The President of the Republic of Poland is the supreme representative of the state and Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces. He safeguards the sovereignty, security, and inviolability of the country's territory. He declares martial law or a state of emergency, appoints

262 Konstytucja III Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 roku, Dz. U. z 1997 r. Nr 78, poz. 483, z 2001 r. Nr 28, poz. 319, z 2006 r. Nr 200, poz. 1471, z 2009 r., Nr 114, poz. 946.

the Supreme Command, and cooperates with the Government in managing the state's defense[263]. The position of the President in the national security system is defined by the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997[264], According to which:

- he serves as head of state, serving as the supreme representative of the Republic of Poland and guarantor of the continuity of state authority;
- ensures observance of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland;
- safeguards the sovereignty and security of the state and the inviolability and integrity of its territory. Most of the powers of the head of state are closely linked to the Council of Ministers, which requests specific actions from the President[265]. The functions and competences of the President of the Republic of Poland in relation to the national security system include[266];
- upholding the fundamental values of the state, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and external and internal security;
- is the supreme commander of the Polish Armed Forces;
- introduces martial law and a state of emergency;
- approves the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland at the request of the Prime Minister;
- at the request of the Prime Minister, issues the Political-Strategic Defense Directive of the Republic of Poland by resolution;
- at the request of the Minister of National Defense, determines the main directions of development of the Polish Armed Forces and their preparation for national defense;
- at the request of the Prime Minister, issues resolutions on the use of Polish military contingents in operations abroad[267]. Article 126, section 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland states that "The President of the Republic of Poland shall ensure observance of the Constitution, and shall safeguard the sovereignty and security of the state as well as the inviolability and integrity of its territory." Pursuant to Article 134 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the President of the Republic of Poland is the supreme commander of the

263 https://sip.lex.pl/splash?returnUrl=%2Fakty-prawne%2Fdzu-dziennik-ustaw%2Fobrona-ojczyzny 19220069%2Fart-24

264 Konstytucja RP z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r.

265 R. Trzeciakowski, *Delimitacja zadań i kompetencji Rady Ministrów i Prezydenta RP oraz ich współdziałanie w zakresie wewnętrznego i zewnętrznego bezpieczeństwa państwa i porządku publicznego,* http://bsp.uwb.edu.pl/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/20B12.pdf, data dostępu 01.06.2021.

266 Zob. *Kierowanie bezpieczeństwem narodowym,* https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/bezpieczenstwo-narodowe/system-bezpieczenstwa-n/kierowanie-bezpieczenst/5975,(dostęp 20.05.2021).

267 *Podsystem kierowania bezpieczeństwem*, https://zpe.gov.pl/a/podsystem-kierowania-bezpieczenstwem-narodowym/D8ALlpS4h, data dostępu 04.06.2021.

Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. Furthermore, pursuant to the provisions of Article 133 of the Constitution, the President is the representative of the state in external relations. Furthermore, the President's powers can be analyzed through the prism of the occurrence of a threat to the state. Therefore, if during martial law there is a need to defend the state, this defense is directed by the President of the Republic of Poland in cooperation with the Council of Ministers. During martial law, the President of the Republic of Poland, in particular:

- decides, at the request of the Council of Ministers, on the transfer of public authorities to specific command positions;
- decides, at the request of the Council of Ministers, on the states of combat readiness of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland;
- specifies, at the request of the Council of Ministers, the tasks of the Armed Forces during martial law;
- may appoint, at the request of the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces;
- approves, at the request of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, plans for the operational use of the Armed Forces;
- recognizes, at the request of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces Armed Forces, specific areas of the Republic of Poland considered zones of direct warfare[268,269].

Taking into account the specified powers: The Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the Act on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland establish bodies advising the President, which are:

- The National Security Council – an advisory body to the President of the Republic of Poland regarding the internal and external security of the state. The National Security Council has no decision-making authority, however, within its scope of competence, it may consider and issue opinions on foreign policy guidelines, a catalogue of strategic national security issues and draft strategies in this area, as well as defense doctrine, directions for the development of the armed forces, and non-military issues concerning the preparation of the national security system.
- The Cabinet Council – convened for matters of particular importance and formed by the Council of Ministers.

268 Ustawa z 29 sierpnia 2002 r. o stanie wojennym oraz o kompetencjach Naczelnego Dowódcy Sił Zbrojnych i zasadach jego podległości konstytucyjnym organom Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej.
269 Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 1 czerwca 2016 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o stanie wojennym oraz o kompetencjach Naczelnego Dowódcy Sił Zbrojnych i zasadach jego podległości konstytucyjnym organom Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Dz.U. 2016 poz. 851

□ The National Security Bureau – monitors activities affecting the state of national security and defense. The President, with the aforementioned powers and advisory bodies, is the main element of the state security system, creating an integrated structure comprising state forces and resources designated to implement security tasks. Effective and efficient actions by the President of the Republic of Poland in the area of national security are only possible based on extensive cooperation with other bodies and elements of the management system. Such actions allow for the development of state security initiatives and strategies at the state level. The general constitutional norm regarding safeguarding the sovereignty and security of the state, as well as the inviolability and integrity of its territory, was expanded upon in the Act of 11 March 2022 on the Defense of the Homeland (Journal of Laws, item 655). Pursuant to Article 24 of the Act, the President:

1) submits recommendations for the national security strategy to the Council of Ministers before the Council of Ministers begins work on its draft; 2) approves, by resolution, the national security strategy at the request of the Prime Minister; 3) submits recommendations to the Council of Ministers regarding the defense preparations of the Republic of Poland;

4) issues, by resolution, at the request of the Prime Minister, the Political-Strategic Defense Directive of the Republic of Poland and other implementing documents for the national security strategy[270];

5) approves, at the request of the Prime Minister, plans for national defense system exercises, which are organized periodically, at least every four years, with the participation of the highest state authorities, and directs their conduct;

6) decides, at the request of the Council of Ministers, to introduce or change a specific state of defense readiness;

7) decides, if necessary for the defense of the state, at the request of the Council of Ministers, the date on which warfare begins on the territory of the Republic of Poland, and decides in the same manner the date on which warfare ends on the territory of the Republic of Poland;

8) directs the defense of the state, in cooperation with the Council of Ministers, upon the appointment of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and his assumption of command;

9) may request information relevant to the security and defense of the state from all public authorities, central and local government administrations, businesses, heads of other

[270] https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/prezydenta-rp/kompetencje-w-zakresie/6076,Kompetencje-Prezydenta-RP-w-zakresie-bezpieczenstwa-i-obronnosci-panstwa.html

organizational units, and social organizations; 10) initiates and sponsors initiatives aimed at shaping patriotic and defensive attitudes in society.

It is worth noting that documents approved and issued by the President constitute the basis for implementing initiatives and planning plans in the sphere of national security policy, as well as for undertaking actions aimed at improving the state's defense system. The general authority to safeguard the sovereignty and security of the state and the inviolability and integrity of its territory obliges the President to analyze and assess potential threats and initiate legally permissible actions to counteract them. Depending on the nature and degree of the external threat to the state, the President may, at the request of the Prime Minister, order general or partial mobilization and use of the Armed Forces to defend the Republic of Poland (Article 136 of the Constitution).

Another important authority of the Head of State is contained in Article Article 234 of the Constitution states: "If, during martial law, the Sejm is unable to convene, the President of the Republic, at the request of the Council of Ministers, shall issue regulations with the force of law within the scope and limits specified in Article 228, paragraphs 3-5. These regulations are subject to approval by the Sejm at the next session." This constitutional provision grants the President special powers to dispose, in a specific situation occurring in the state and within a strictly defined time, of the powers vested in both the legislative and executive powers. It should be emphasized that only the President has been endowed with such powers, which confirms his key role in the national security system. Furthermore, pursuant to the provisions of the Constitution, the President of the Republic, in the field of state security:

• Confers, at the request of the Minister of National Defense, military ranks specified in statutes (Article 134, paragraph 5);

• In the event of an external threat to the state, an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or when international agreements stipulate a commitment to joint defense against aggression, the President of the Republic of Poland, at the request of the Council of Ministers, may introduce martial law in part or throughout the entire territory of the state (Article 229);

• In the event of a threat to the constitutional order of the state, the security of its citizens, or public order, at the request of the Council of Ministers, may introduce a state of emergency in part or throughout the entire territory of the state for a specified period, but no longer than 90 days (Article 230, paragraph 1).

It is worth emphasizing that, pursuant to Article 11, paragraph 1 of the Act of 21 June 2002 on a state of emergency, during the state of emergency, the President of the Republic of Poland,

at the request of the Prime Minister, may decide to use units and subunits of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland to restore the normal functioning of the state if previously used forces and resources have been exhausted. The powers of the President of the Republic of Poland in the field of command over the Armed Forces are included in the provisions of the Act on the Defense of the Homeland[271]. Pursuant to Article 25 of the Act, the President:

1) determines, at the request of the Minister of National Defense, the main directions of development of the Armed Forces and their preparations for state defense;

2) approves, at the request of the Minister of National Defense, by resolution:

a) national plans for the use of the Armed Forces in state defense;

b) the organization and principles of operation of the Armed Forces' wartime command system;

3) designates, at the request of the Prime Minister, the person proposed for appointment to the position of Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces;

4) may participate in briefings of senior staff of the Ministry of National Defense and the Armed Forces.

The Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces is the President of the Republic of Poland's subsidiary body in directing state defense. Furthermore, the President, at the request of the Council of Ministers or the Prime Minister, decides on the deployment of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland abroad. This occurs in the event of the Armed Forces being deployed abroad to participate in:

• an armed conflict or to reinforce the forces of the state or allied countries;

• a peacekeeping mission;

• an operation to prevent acts of terrorism or their consequences;

• the evacuation of Polish citizens, if necessary to protect their use or health, from a state that is not an EU Member State, a member state of the European Economic Area, or a state party to the North Atlantic Treaty.

The President also decides on the presence of foreign troops on Polish territory. At the request of the Minister of National Defense, submitted after obtaining the consent of the Prime Minister, he issues consent for the presence of foreign armed forces as part of the military reinforcement of the Polish Armed Forces or NATO troops in military operations conducted on Polish territory during peacetime[272]. Wartime and the resulting specific nature of governing the

[271] https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/prezydenta-rp/kompetencje-w-zakresie/6076,Kompetencje-Prezydenta-RP-w-zakresie-bezpieczenstwa-i-obronnosci-panstwa.html

[272] https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/prezydenta-rp/kompetencje-w-zakresie/6076,Kompetencje-Prezydenta-RP-w-

state and its defense require the adoption of the principle of single-person command and responsibility. The constitutional regulations mentioned above regarding the President's powers in this regard—namely, supreme commander of the Armed Forces, ordering general mobilization and deployment of the Armed Forces to defend the Republic of Poland, appointing the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces for wartime, and the ability to issue regulations with the force of law during martial law—predispose the President to direct the state's defense in cooperation with the Council of Ministers, upon the appointment of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and his assumption of command. In this case, the element of cooperation between the two centers of executive power is maintained.

When analyzing the legal instruments at the President's disposal, it is impossible to ignore the powers related to ensuring the state's internal security. If the use of armed Police units and subunits proves insufficient, the President may decide, at the request of the Prime Minister, to use units and subunits of the Polish Armed Forces to assist the Police. The President's same authority applies to assistance from the Border Guard. In the event of a threat to public security or a disruption of public order within the territorial scope of a border crossing and in the border zone, in particular:

1) a direct threat of an attack on the inviolability of the state border or its actual execution;

2) a direct public danger to the life, health, or freedom of citizens;

3) a direct threat of an attack on facilities or equipment used by the Border Guard;

4) a threat of a terrorist offense or its actual execution against facilities or equipment used by the Border Guard or one that may result in a threat to human life – if the use of Border Guard forces proves insufficient or is justified by the level of threat, units and subunits of the Polish Armed Forces may be used to assist the Border Guard. Given the broad powers granted to the President, particularly those related to safeguarding the sovereignty and security of the state and the inviolability and integrity of its territory, the Constitution establishes the National Security Council as a body advising the President on matters of internal and external state security. To provide a forum for cooperation within the executive branch, the Constitution establishes another body: the Cabinet Council, which, however, does not possess any authoritative powers. The President may convene it for matters of particular importance. The Cabinet Council is formed by the Council of Ministers, chaired by the President of the Republic of Poland[273]. Pursuant to Article 26 of the National Defense Act, the President of the

zakresie-bezpieczenstwa-i-obronnosci-panstwa.html

[273] https://www.bbn.gov.pl/pl/prezydenta-rp/kompetencje-w-zakresie/6076,Kompetencje-Prezydenta-RP-w-zakresie-bezpieczenstwa-i-obronnosci-panstwa.html

Republic of Poland performs security and defense tasks with the assistance of the National Security Bureau. Due to the lack of a suitable strategic center at the state level, the National Security Bureau also monitors projects affecting the state's security and defense. Pursuant to Article 715 of the National Defense Act, a representative of the President of the Republic of Poland participates in meetings of the Standing Committee or Council of Ministers committees, where matters concerning national security and defense are discussed; as well as in meetings of the Council of Ministers, where matters concerning national security and defense are discussed.

The President, endowed with the above-mentioned powers, is a fundamental link in the state's security system, forming an integrated structure comprising all state forces and resources intended to carry out security tasks.

5.3. Scope of Responsibilities of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Poland and the Prime Minister in the National Security System

The Council of Ministers plays the most important role in Poland's security system. It is referred to as the leader of public administration and plays a fundamental role in its activities[274]. The Council of Ministers and the government administration constitute the main executive apparatus of the state, responsible for maintaining internal and external security, and crisis management. The government directs the country's defense, supervises the secret services and the police, and coordinates the activities of ministries and local government administrations. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997 grants this body executive power. According to the provisions of the Constitution, the government bears full responsibility for conducting the country's domestic and foreign policy. The provisions of the Constitution generally assign the following tasks to the Council of Ministers in the field of state security:

- it ensures the country's internal security and public order,
- it guarantees the country's external security,
- it exercises overall leadership in the field of national defense,
- it determines annually the number of citizens called up for active military service[275].

The list of security management competencies can and should be expanded to include, among other things: developing national security strategy projects, implementing crisis management

274 M. Berek, Rada Ministrów jako organ inicjujący postępowanie ustawodawcze, Warszawa 2017, ss.13-43.
275 Konstytucja Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r. uchwalona przez Zgromadzenie Narodowe w dniu 2 kwietnia 1997 r., przyjęta przez Naród w referendum konstytucyjnym w dniu 25 maja 1997 r., podpisana przez Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej w dniu 16 lipca 1997 r., Dz.U. 1997 nr 78 poz. 483

tasks, preparing a national security management system, including the defense of the state and public authorities, for the functioning of command positions, maintaining constant defense readiness of the state, identifying facilities of particular importance to state security, and ensuring the functioning of the defense training system[276].

Considering the duties entrusted to him in the field of national defense and security, the Prime Minister holds a significant place in the structure of state bodies. Legal provisions, therefore, assign him a number of important powers. First, the oversight powers granted to the Prime Minister should be analyzed. Their constitutional basis is the provisions of Article 148, paragraphs 2 and 5 of the Constitution, according to which the Prime Minister directs the work of the Council of Ministers and coordinates and supervises the activities of its individual members. This provision is consistent with Article 146, paragraph 4, paragraph 3 of the Constitution, which specifies the government's coordination and oversight powers over all government administration bodies[277]. The Prime Minister oversees both the compliance of a given minister's actions with the Constitution and the direction of those actions with state policy. The government is the segment of the executive branch responsible for creating and implementing state policy. This policy should be coherent and uniform, and the Prime Minister, as head of government, should exercise special oversight over it.[278].

Pursuant to Article 148, Section 4 of the Constitution, this oversight should primarily consist of the proper implementation of state policy by the government. In addition to these remarks, it should be noted that the legislator established in Article 146, Section 2 of the Constitution the important principle of presumption of the functions, tasks, and competences of the Council of Ministers, which is expressed by granting the government decision-making authority in all matters concerning the scope of state policy not reserved for other state bodies or local government. This presumption covers state policy in its entirety, including both domestic and foreign policy. There is no other body in the state that could replace the Council of Ministers in this area. The president certainly does not possess such statutory powers, as under the Constitution, the president performs systemic functions distinct from the government[279];[280]. The Prime Minister has a variety of instruments at his disposal to conduct

276 M. Gikiewicz, K. Jarzynka, *Analiza kompetencji Prezydenta Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz Rady Ministrów w zakresie kierowania bezpieczeństwem*, Zeszyty Naukowe SGSP 2018, Nr 65 (TOM 1)/1/2018, Warszawa 2018, s. 137.
277 Skrzydło W. *Rada Ministrów i administracja rządowa [w:] Polskie prawo konstytucyjne*, red. W. Skrzydło, Lublin, 2006.
278 Gąska M. *Kompetencje organów władzy wykonawczej w dziedzinie obronności państwa i sił zbrojnych*, Warszawa 2002.
279 Garlicki L. *Polskie prawo konstytucyjne. Zarys wykładu*, Warszawa 2008.
280 Leoński Z. Zarys prawa administracyjnego, Warszawa 2000.

this oversight. He may conduct it personally during cabinet meetings or through the Chancellery of the Prime Minister. Among the tasks authorized by the Prime Minister, the Chancellery performs, in particular: monitoring the implementation of tasks designated by the Council of Ministers and the Prime Minister, presenting conclusions from the conducted oversights and submitting proposals for improving oversight methods; assessing the socio-economic impact (costs and benefits) of proposed regulations and preparing impact assessments, including those for projects with significant long-term impact on social and economic development; developing assessments of the country's international situation and long-term foreign policy concepts; and publishing the Journal of Laws of the Republic of Poland and the Official Journal of the Republic of Poland, the Monitor Polski. In practice, most of the Prime Minister's oversight tasks are performed by the Chancellery, which constitutes his auxiliary apparatus and provides him with comprehensive services (see the Order on Granting the Statute of the Chancellery of the Prime Minister...). Pursuant to Article 148, point 7 of the Constitution, the Prime Minister is the official superior of all employees of the government administration - both central and local authorities[281]. This is another provision sanctioning the prime minister's special position in the field of national defense and security. This regulation leads to the conclusion that, in the field of national security, the prime minister remains the superior of the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces (see Tasks of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces...), military district commanders, heads of Voivodeship Military Staffs, and Commanders of Military Recruitment Commands. However, this authority is not direct. In peacetime, it is exercised through the Minister of National Defense, and in wartime, through the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, appointed by the president (see Constitution of the Republic of Poland..., art. 134 sec. 2 and 4). Furthermore, the prime minister supervises local government, which includes overseeing the performance of assigned tasks in the field of national defense and security. The forms and scope of this supervision are precisely defined in individual acts (Act on local government…; Act on district government…; Act on voivodeship government[282].

The position of the Prime Minister was significantly strengthened in August 1996 through the adoption of the Act on the Organization and Procedure of the Council of Ministers and on the Scope of Ministers' Activities (Journal of Laws of 1996, No. 106, item 492, as amended). Although this act was created before the adoption of the 1997 Constitution,

[281] Gąska M. *Kompetencje organów władzy wykonawczej w dziedzinie obronności państwa i sił zbrojnych,* Warszawa 2002.
[282] Jagielski *J. Kontrola administracji publicznej*, Warszawa 1999.

it nevertheless granted the Prime Minister several new powers, some of which were subsequently sanctioned in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. This move is consistent with the trend toward weakening the president's constitutional position while proportionally strengthening the position of the Prime Minister. Among the new powers granted to the Prime Minister was the right to establish, by regulation, the detailed scope of a minister's activities—the so-called The Prime Minister's organizational authority (Regulation on the detailed scope of activities of the Minister of Finance...; Regulation on the detailed scope of activities of the Minister of Environment...; Regulation on the detailed scope of activities of the Minister of Foreign Affairs...). Based on this authority, the Prime Minister determines, among other things, the detailed scope of activities of ministers who play a significant role in the state security system, i.e., the minister responsible for internal affairs and the Minister of National Defense. The Prime Minister's powers in this regard are already noticeable at an earlier stage – the formation of the Council of Ministers. After all, it is the Prime Minister who chooses the composition of the government with which he will cooperate, including the selection of persons holding the two aforementioned ministerial positions. The relevant acts are the regulations of the Prime Minister:

1) of November 18, 2011, on the detailed scope of activities of the Minister of Internal Affairs (Journal of Laws of 2011, No. 248, item 1491);

2) of November 18, 2011, on the detailed scope of activities of the Minister of National Defense (Journal of Laws of 2011, No. 248, item 1484).

A certain legislative inconsistency between the Act of December 14, 1995, on the office of the Minister of National Defense (Journal of Laws of 1996, No. 10, item 56, as amended) and the aforementioned Act on the Council of Ministers deserves attention. Pursuant to Article 10, Section 1 of the Act on the Office of the Minister of National Defense, the Council of Ministers shall define the detailed scope of activities of this office by regulation. However, the aforementioned Article 33, Section 1, Item 1 of the Act on the Council of Ministers grants a similar authority (but with respect to the office of minister in general) to the Prime Minister. Based on each of these statutory authorizations, the authorized entities may issue (and have issued) appropriate regulations. As a result, two regulations exist in parallel, defining the detailed scope of the Minister of National Defense's activities. One of these regulations, issued by the Council of Ministers, is broader and more detailed (see the Regulation on the detailed scope of the Minister of National Defense's activities...). This dichotomous arrangement seems unclear. Therefore, de lege ferenda, the legislator should standardize the content of the indicated

normative acts, granting the authority to define the detailed scope of the Minister of National Defense's activities solely to the Prime Minister. Such a regulation would remain coherent with the contemporary political position of the Prime Minister, who is an independent central body of government administration and the main decision-maker within the "governmental" segment of the executive branch[283];[284].

A significant authority of the Prime Minister is established in Article 29, Section 2 of the Act of 4 September 1997 on Government Administration Departments (Journal of Laws of 2007, No. 65, item 437, as amended). This provision obliges the Minister of Internal Affairs to provide the Prime Minister (and the Head of State) with all information of significant importance to national security, obtained from all bodies and organizational units supervised, subordinated, or subordinated to the Minister. Granting this specific right to be informed to both entities of the executive branch is not accidental. In this way, the legislature intended to create favorable conditions for their cooperation, exchange of views, and possible further collaboration in taking appropriate actions.

Secret services are a crucial element of the internal security system in modern states. This term refers to organized structures established by the state apparatus whose primary purpose is to covertly obtain information relevant to the state's security or to prevent similar structures from obtaining such information. The competences of the Council of Ministers in the field of security identified as foreign[285]. From the perspective of the issues analyzed, the Council for Special Services, operating under the Prime Minister's authority, deserves attention. It constitutes a fundamental element of civilian oversight of entities active in this field. It is a consultative and advisory body responsible for programming, supervising, and coordinating the activities of the special services specified in the Act. The basis for its operation is Article 11 of the Act of 24 May 2002 on the Internal Security Agency and the Foreign Intelligence Agency (Journal of Laws of 2010, No. 29, item 154, as amended). The composition of the council is defined in Article 12, section 2 of the analyzed act. Pursuant to this provision, it is composed of: the chairman (ex officio, the Prime Minister); the secretary of the council; members of the council, i.e., the minister responsible for internal affairs, the minister responsible for foreign affairs, the Minister of National Defense, the minister responsible for public finance, the head of the National Security Bureau, and the minister-member of the Council of Ministers

[283] Mojak R. Parlament a rząd w ustroju trzeciej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Lublin 2007.
[284] Skrzydło W. Rada Ministrów i administracja rządowa [w:] Polskie prawo konstytucyjne, red. W. Skrzydło, Lublin 2006.
[285] Zalewski S. Służby specjalne w państwie demokratycznym, Warszawa 2005.

responsible for coordinating the activities of the special services, provided that one has been appointed by the Prime Minister. The following persons also participate in the meetings of the board: the head of the Internal Security Agency, the head of the Foreign Intelligence Agency, the head of the Central Anticorruption Bureau, the head of the Military Counterintelligence Service, the head of the Military Intelligence Service, and the chairman of the Sejm Committee for Special Services. It is also stipulated that the President of the Republic of Poland may delegate a representative to participate in the meetings of the board[286]. Without going into detail about this issue, as it falls outside the main thrust of this discussion, it is worth mentioning that the detailed tasks of the Board for Special Services are specified in Article 12 of the aforementioned Act, while Article 12, Section 9 authorizes the Council of Ministers to issue an appropriate regulation specifying the procedures and principles for the Board's operation. It is also worth emphasizing the existence of an advisory body to the Council of Ministers, which is an auxiliary body, the Standing Committee of the Council of Ministers, appointed to consider a specific case or group of cases[287]. Its tasks include, among others, considering and recommending positions and draft decisions in the sphere of state security.

5.4. Competencies and Responsibilities of the Minister of National Defense of the Republic of Poland

Among the individual ministers, the role in defense, as part of security, falls to the Minister of National Defense[288]. He plays an important role and his duties include carrying out defense tasks and supervising the work of the Ministry of National Defense subordinate to him[289], as well as supervising subordinate organizational units and other entities[290]. Several aspects of his specific tasks within the national security system require analysis. Acting, as it were, on behalf of the entire executive branch, the Minister of National Defense exercises civilian control over the Armed Forces, as defined in Article 26 of the Constitution. This control is realized in two ways. First, as already mentioned, through this minister, the president exercises command over the Armed Forces in peacetime. Second, also through him, the

286 Rydlewski G., 2009, *Pozycja, zadania i instrumenty działania ministra właściwego do spraw wewnętrznych [w:] Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne państwa*. Wybrane zagadnienia, red. S. Sulowski, M. Brzeziński, Warszawa.
287 G. Pietrek, M. Stefański, *Wyzwania bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, Gdańsk 2018, ss. 38-39.
288 B. Wiśniewski, *System Bezpieczeństwa Państwa konteksty teoretyczne i praktyczne*, Szczytno 2013, ss. 226-227.
289 Np. ministrowi spraw wewnętrznych podlegają lub nadzorowanymi przez niego są: Dyrektor Zakładu Emerytalno Rentowego Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych, Komendant Główny Policji, Komendant Główny Straży Granicznej, Komendant Główny Państwowej Straży Pożarnej, Szef Obrony Cywilnej Kraju, Szef Urzędu do Spraw Cudzoziemców.
290 Zob. A. Warmiński, *Administracja bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego w Polsce*, Warszawa 2013.

government exercises overall leadership in the field of national defense. Therefore, the view must be shared that the Minister of National Defense occupies a crucial position in the system of civilian control over the Armed Forces[291]. This is facilitated by the customary principle, established in the Polish political system, of entrusting the position of the head of the Ministry of National Defence to a civilian who is not in active military service[292];[293].

Contemporary practice, however, operates solely on the basis of accepted and established custom. Given that only a fully "civilian" Minister of National Defense can properly exercise civilian control over the military, a de lege ferenda requirement should be formulated for this issue to be regulated in a provision of substantive law with statutory rank, such as the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. The Minister of National Defense's catalog of powers includes the exercise of leadership over subordinate units and structures. This authority, according to Article 34 of the Act on the Council of Ministers, includes the creation and dissolution of organizational units, the appointment of management staff for these units, and the control and supervision of their effective management, operational efficiency, and compliance with the law. These powers, after all, belong to a civilian government administration body and therefore cannot be delegated to another entity[294]. Furthermore, the Minister of National Defense, within the framework of his ministry, is obligated to initiate and develop government policy in the field of defense. He also has the ability to initiate legislative initiatives within the government, which involves submitting preliminary draft bills at meetings of the Council of Ministers.

On January 1, 2002, the Minister of National Defense gained significant authoritative powers. On that day, the Act of August 24, 2001, on the Military Police and Military Law Enforcement Bodies (Journal of Laws of 2001, No. 123, item 1353, as amended) entered into force. The legislator defined the Military Police as a separate, specialized service within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, subordinated to the Minister of National Defense (Article 1 of the Act). Prior to this change, the Military Police was not directly subordinate to the Minister of National Defense; it remained merely an authority supervised by him[295];[296];[297]. Due to the functions performed, the activities of the Minister of National Defence are subject

[291] Sokolewicz W. *Bezpośrednia kontrola organów władzy wykonawczej nad Siłami Zbrojnymi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* [w:] Krytyka prawa. Niezależne studia nad prawem, t. III: Bezpieczeństwo, red. W. Sokolewicz, Warszawa 2010.
[292] Żebrowski A. *Kontrola cywilna nad siłami zbrojnymi RP*, Warszawa 1998.
[293] Garlicki L., 1993, *Parlament a sprawy obronności w Polsce*, Biuletyn BSE, nr 2.
[294] Wołpiuk W.J. *Siły Zbrojne w regulacjach Konstytucji RP*, Warszawa 1998.
[295] Starościak J. *Prawo administracyjne*, Warszawa 1969.
[296] Filipowicz A. *Pojęcie i funkcje nadzoru w administracji państwowej*, Warszawa 1984.
[297] Dolnicki B. *Nadzór nad samorządem terytorialnym*, Katowice 1993.

to broad control[298]. Two levels of this oversight require delineation. The first level concerns the oversight of the Minister of National Defense within the scope of powers vested in him by the Constitution and ordinary legislation. In this regard, three oversight instruments require separate consideration. The first is political (parliamentary) oversight exercised by the Sejm through the procedure of a vote of no confidence in the minister (Article 159 of the Constitution). Second, the Minister of National Defense is politically accountable (albeit extra-parliamentarily) to the Prime Minister, who may at any time submit a motion to the President to dismiss him from office (Article 161 of the Constitution). Finally, the Minister of National Defense is subject to individual review by the Head of State, who – upon reasonable suspicion in this regard – may submit a preliminary motion to hold him accountable before the State Tribunal (Article 144, paragraph 3, item 13 of the Constitution). A separate level is the oversight of the Minister of National Defense, linked to the lack of substantive independence of the Armed Forces, which operate within the structure of the Ministry of National Defense and report to its Chief. In this regard, two bodies competent in the field of state audit deserve attention: the Supreme Audit Office and the Commissioner for Human Rights.

Under the Constitution, the Supreme Audit Office is the supreme state audit body, subordinate to the Sejm and operating on a collegiate basis (Article 202). Pursuant to Article 5 of the Act of 23 December 1994 on the Supreme Audit Office (Journal of Laws of 2012, item 82), the Supreme Audit Office is authorized to audit the office of the Minister of National Defense and the Armed Forces subordinate to it in terms of the legality, efficiency, purposefulness, and reliability of their activities. The Supreme Audit Office undertakes actions on its own initiative or at the request of the Sejm or its bodies, or at the request of the President of the Republic of Poland or the Prime Minister. After conducting an audit, the Supreme Audit Office submits its findings to the Sejm, the President of the Republic of Poland, and the Prime Minister.

The Ministry of National Defense and the Armed Forces may also become the subject of the Commissioner for Human Rights' interest and analysis. Although this is not expressly stated in the Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights, the legislator did not exclude these structures from the scope of this body's competence. Pursuant to Article 1, Section 2 of the Act, the Commissioner safeguards the freedoms and rights of persons and citizens as defined in the Constitution and other normative acts. When taking up a given case, the Commissioner may

[298] Sokolewicz W. *Bezpośrednia kontrola organów władzy wykonawczej nad Siłami Zbrojnymi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* [w:] Krytyka prawa. Niezależne studia nad prawem, t. III: Bezpieczeństwo, red. W. Sokolewicz, Warszawa 2010.

conduct an investigation independently, refer the matter to the relevant supervisory authorities, particularly the prosecutor's office or state audit bodies, or request the Sejm to commission the Supreme Audit Office to conduct an audit to examine a specific matter in whole or in part. In addition to these considerations, a specific solution in force in the Federal Republic of Germany deserves note. In 1956, as a result of the introduction of Article 54b to the German Constitution, the office of the Bundestag Plenipotentiary for Military Affairs was established, which remains in operation to this day. This measure was a response to criticism of the then-emerging rearmament of Germany. However, the Bundestag Plenipotentiary for Military Affairs does not fulfill the role of a classic ombudsman. It serves as a subsidiary body of the House of Commons in exercising civilian parliamentary oversight of the armed forces. In carrying out its duties, it is obligated to submit appropriate reports to Parliament[299].[300];[301].

An attempt was made to introduce a solution analogous to the German one in Polish legislation. However, the view was expressed that there were currently many institutions that adequately represented the interests of military personnel. Therefore, the need to create a new body with competencies consistent with the scope of activities of existing state bodies was not recognized. In the era of professionalization of the Armed Forces, strengthening the existing representative and complaint bodies within the Polish Armed Forces was deemed more rational. The Minister of National Defense performs the tasks entrusted to him with the assistance of the Ministry of National Defense. Article 1, Section 2 of the Act on the Office of the Minister of National Defense states that this ministry includes the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces. Among the numerous duties assigned to the minister is the management of the overall activities of the Armed Forces. However, in peacetime, the Minister of National Defense commands the Armed Forces with the assistance of the Chief of General Staff, who is endowed with appropriate commanding powers (Article 6, Section 1 and Article 7, Section 1 of the Act on the Ministry of National Defense). In addition, the Chief of the General Staff also participates in many other activities undertaken by the Minister, including submitting proposals and providing opinions on decisions related to the structure, organization and activities of the Armed Forces (Article 3, Section 2 of the Act on the Ministry of National Defense). This raises questions about the relationship between the Minister of National Defense and the Chief of the General Staff, as well as between the executive branches of each of these offices, i.e., the

[299] Sarnecki P. *Ustroje konstytucyjne państw współczesnych*, Kraków 2005.
[300] Wołpiuk W.J. *Siły Zbrojne w regulacjach Konstytucji RP*, Warszawa 1998.
[301] Gąska M. *Kompetencje organów władzy wykonawczej w dziedzinie obronności państwa i sił zbrojnych,* Warszawa 2002.

Ministry of National Defense and the General Staff. It is beyond doubt that in the presented system, the minister holds the superior position. In Article 1, Section 1 of the Act on the Office of the Minister of National Defense, the legislator defined the minister as the chief state administration authority in the field of national defense. The minister's authority extends to the entire Ministry of National Defense, including the Chief of the General Staff, who reports directly to him. The minister's superior position is also evidenced by the inability of the Chief of the General Staff to replace him. This issue is also worth considering in relation to the constitutional axiom of cooperation between executive authorities. The close relationship between the Minister of National Defense and the government and parliament, which constitute his political base, as well as the Chief of the General Staff (as the highest-ranking soldier in terms of his position), and the president, who is supposedly above all parties and guided by the national interest, is a natural phenomenon. However, the proper functioning of this model will only be possible in conditions of harmony and cooperation between these entities. If political rivalry were to arise between them, a pathological phenomenon could arise, with the military becoming the object of ongoing political games[302].

5.5. The Role and Responsibilities of the Minister of Internal Affairs in the National Security System

When analyzing the position of the Council of Ministers in the area of national defense and security, it is impossible to ignore the significant powers vested in this area by the minister heading the government administration department known as "internal affairs." Currently, this department forms a separate organizational, financial, and personnel structure – the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Previous political practice (1997–2011) dictated the practice of appointing a single minister responsible for two government administration departments: internal affairs and public administration, thus creating a hybrid structure – the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration. However, within the government formed after the 2011 parliamentary elections, this structure was separated, creating two separate and mutually independent ministries: the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Administration and Digitization. Article 29, Section 1 of the Act on Government Administration Departments specifies the list of matters within the Ministry of Internal Affairs' sphere of interest. These include: protecting

[302] Sokolewicz W. *Bezpośrednia kontrola organów władzy wykonawczej nad Siłami Zbrojnymi Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* [w:] Krytyka prawa. Niezależne studia nad prawem, t. III: Bezpieczeństwo, red. W. Sokolewicz, Warszawa 2010.

public safety and order; protecting state borders, controlling border traffic and foreigners; crisis management; civil defense; fire protection; counteracting the effects of natural disasters and other similar events that threaten public safety; supervising mountain and water rescue; citizenship; population registration, identity cards, and passports; civil registration, and changing names and surnames. Furthermore, in light of the competence regulation, the catalogue of the Minister of Internal Affairs' competences also includes powers that cover actions necessary for:

1) removing threats to the smooth functioning of the supreme offices, central, and local government administration bodies, including ensuring peace and order in buildings and other facilities occupied by these bodies;

2) preventing unlawful acts or omissions that could endanger the safety or order of road or rail traffic, impede or disrupt such traffic, or, in connection with such traffic, disturb public peace or order, or expose anyone to loss; 3) initiating and coordinating actions necessary to ensure redress of damages on behalf of the State Treasury resulting from the above-mentioned events[303].

The Minister of Internal Affairs, similar to the head of the Ministry of National Defense, exercises management authority over the units and structures subordinate to him. Within the framework of the authority granted to him, he establishes and liquidates these units, appoints their management staff, and exercises control and supervision over them in terms of effective management, operational efficiency, and compliance with the law. Furthermore, within the scope of matters entrusted to this administrative department, the minister in charge of the "internal affairs" department is responsible for initiating and developing policy for the Council of Ministers and submitting drafts of relevant normative acts at government meetings. A significant authority of the Minister of Internal Affairs is established in Article 18, Section 1 of the Act of 6 April 1990 on the Police (Journal of Laws of 2011, No. 287, item 1687). Pursuant to this provision, in strictly defined cases, the Minister of Internal Affairs may request the Prime Minister to order the use of armed police units and subunits to ensure security or restore public order. If, however, an urgent situation arose, the Minister of Internal Affairs may make the appropriate decision independently, immediately informing the Prime Minister of the steps taken (Article 18, Section 2). The adopted regulation should be assessed positively. The cases specified in the Act, in which the use of armed police units or subunits is permitted to ensure

[303] Rydlewski G. *Pozycja, zadania i instrumenty działania ministra właściwego do spraw wewnętrznych* [w:] Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne państwa. Wybrane zagadnienia, red. S. Sulowski, M. Brzeziński, Warszawa 2009.

security or restore public order, are characterized by high gravity. Therefore, the Minister of Internal Affairs' independent decision in this regard should be considered an exceptional case, dictated – in accordance with the statutory provision – by a situation that cannot be delayed. It should be assumed that each ministerial decision in this respect should be duly justified. This is all the more advisable given the aforementioned broad scope of responsibility of each member of the Council of Ministers: parliamentary responsibility to the Sejm, political responsibility to the Prime Minister, and legal responsibility to the State Tribunal. Based on Article 29, Section 4 of the Act on Government Administration Departments, the minister responsible for internal affairs supervises the activities of the Police, the Border Guard, the State Fire Service, the National Civil Defense, the Head of the Office for Foreigners, the National Center for Criminal Information, and the Government Protection Bureau. Consequently, the following central offices and bodies of government administration are subordinated to or supervised by him: the Chief Commander of the Police, the Chief Commander of the Border Guard, the Chief Commander of the State Fire Service, the Chief of the National Civil Defense, and the President of the Office for Repatriation and Foreigners.

An analysis of the government's organizational structure and the tasks assigned to individual government administration departments leads to the conclusion that, in addition to the heads of the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, other ministers also perform tasks that are, to some extent, embedded in state security. In particular, the minister responsible for the "public finances" department and the minister in charge of the Ministry of Justice should be mentioned. The former minister remains responsible for matters related to the state's financial security and control of the treasury sector. He also supervises tax inspection authorities. In turn, the Minister of Justice – in the area of state security – is responsible for the execution of penalties, punitive measures, corrective measures, and educational measures ordered by courts. The Central Board of the Prison Service also reports to the Minister of Justice.

CONCLUSIONS

The defense and security of the Republic of Poland constitute one of the most important areas of state life. This area remains the subject of interest of the "governmental" segment of the executive branch at several different levels. As explained in the course of the argument, at the first level, the Council of Ministers in corpore exercises general leadership in this area, exercising a number of related, specific competencies. This regulation remains coherent with the Council of Ministers' fundamental function of conducting the domestic and foreign policy

of the Republic of Poland, which also includes the issue of security policy. The next level consists of the powers granted – both by the Constitution and by ordinary legislation – to the Prime Minister. The analysis conducted seems to confirm that these powers are properly aligned with the contemporary concept of the position of the Prime Minister, who is no longer the first among equal ministers, but the de facto head of government. They therefore remain coherent with the strong position of the Prime Minister, which de facto makes him an independent body of the Polish executive branch.

It should be emphasized that certain non-normative factors are equally crucial to the Prime Minister's actual use of his powers in the area of national defense and security. One such subjective factor is the personality of the office holder, his determination, and his willingness to act as a decision-maker. It is also crucial that he possesses an appropriate political base to support his actions. The third dimension, however, encompasses the powers of individual members of the Council of Ministers who manage government departments or perform tasks assigned by the Prime Minister.

The breadth of national defense and security issues and the multitude of entities, subordinate bodies, and offices performing tasks in this area within this system require appropriate harmonization of their activities. Tensions and misunderstandings often arise regarding the interpretation of the powers of these entities and the tasks they perform. These tensions and misunderstandings are the result of certain solutions being developed at different times, within different political systems. In this context, the axiom of cooperation between government bodies, as defined in the Polish Constitution, takes on particular significance. Based on the analysis conducted, it should be interpreted as a duty of cooperation within the "governmental" segment of the executive branch between the individual structures that comprise it. Only on this basis will it be possible to ensure the proper coordination of actions undertaken, essential for their proper implementation.

Chapter VI

STATE SECURITY SYSTEM – BODIES, INSTITUTIONS, AND RESPONSE MECHANISMS

6.1. Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland – Tasks in the State Security System

The main task of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland[304] the state security system is responsible for protecting the country's independence, the inviolability of its borders, and its sovereignty. The military carries out defense missions, participates in international operations, and supports civilian authorities in crisis situations. To ensure the achievement of national interests and strategic security objectives, the Republic of Poland organizes and develops an integrated national security system. It comprises the state defense system, established to counter all threats to national interests. This system is integrated with the allied security system through joint procedures for crisis and wartime operations and participation in allied defense planning. The state defense system consists of:

1) the state defense control subsystem – composed of government and public administration bodies, along with supporting offices and necessary infrastructure, and the command bodies of the Polish Armed Forces;

2) two executive subsystems:

– the military subsystem – composed of the Polish Armed Forces;

– the non-military subsystem – composed of executive structures of public administration, businesses, and other organizational units[305].

To ensure the proper execution of its tasks, the State Defense System should be organized and maintained in a manner that guarantees the ability to deter, protect, and defend, as well as the implementation of collective defense tasks and cooperation with allied structures, while maintaining the ability to operate effectively independently. Furthermore, it must ensure effective cooperation between all government and public administration bodies, businesses carrying out defense tasks, non-governmental organizations, and individual citizens for the sake of state defense. Efficient operation under all conditions is essential through appropriate organization, equipment, and information flow, as well as the ability to monitor and counter

[304] https://sbn.wat.edu.pl/pdf-129783-56654?filename=ZADANIA-SIL-ZBROJNYCH-RP-.pdf

[305] Strategia Obronności Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej – strategia sektorowa do Strategii Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 23 września 2009 r.

threats, respond to emerging threats at an early stage, and mitigate their effects. The defense system should ensure the utilization of the competencies, skills, and knowledge of individuals participating in the work of individual subsystems.

The military subsystem is composed of the Polish Armed Forces. They perform tasks arising from the Act of 2 April 1997 – the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, and the Defense Strategy of the Republic of Poland, as detailed in the Political-Strategic Defense Directive of the Republic of Poland issued by the President of the Republic of Poland, as well as relevant national and allied operational plans. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland are apolitical and subject to civilian and democratic control[306].

Non-military defense structures include: government administration, local government, and other state entities and institutions, as well as entrepreneurs charged with carrying out national defense tasks. Regarding the defense tasks of the Polish Armed Forces, the Polish Armed Forces are, above all, a fundamental element of the state's defense system, intended to effectively implement security and defense policy[307]. They maintain readiness to carry out three types of missions: ensuring the country's defense and opposing aggression, participating in the process of stabilizing the international situation, participating in crisis response and humanitarian operations, and supporting internal security and providing assistance to society. In their mission to ensure the country's ability to defend itself and oppose aggression within the framework of their Allied commitments, the Polish Armed Forces maintain readiness to carry out tasks related to the defense and protection of the inviolability of the Republic of Poland's borders. They may participate in counterterrorism operations at home and abroad, in resolving local or regional armed conflicts within or outside the NATO area of responsibility, and participate in defensive operations outside the country, in accordance with Allied commitments under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty[308].

Conducting a strategic defense operation on the territory of the Republic of Poland. Participation in the mission to stabilize the international situation and in crisis response and humanitarian operations requires the Polish Armed Forces to maintain forces and capabilities to participate in peacekeeping and crisis response operations conducted by NATO,

[306] Ustawa z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r. Konstytucja RP (DzU Nr 78, poz. 483, ze zm.), Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego RP, Strategia Obronności, Polityczno-Strategiczna Dyrektywa Obronna RP, wprowadzona Postanowieniem Prezydenta RP.
[307] Ustawa z dnia 21 listopada 1967 r. o powszechnym obowiązku obrony RP (DzU z 2004 r. Nr 241, poz. 2416, ze zm.) – art. 3. Obowiązek obrony RP wynika również bezpośrednio z art. 26 Konstytucji RP.
[308] Traktat Północnoatlantycki podpisany w Waszyngtonie w dniu 4 kwietnia 1949 r. (DzU z 2000 r. Nr 87, poz. 970).

the EU, the UN, and other operations resulting from international agreements. In order to fulfill the mission of supporting internal security and providing assistance to society, the Polish Armed Forces maintain the ability to perform tasks involving monitoring and protecting airspace, supporting the protection of the land border and territorial waters, conducting reconnaissance and intelligence activities, monitoring radioactive, chemical, and biological contamination on the territory of the country, clearing areas of explosives and dangerous objects of military origin, conducting search and rescue operations, and assisting state authorities, public administration, and the public in responding to threats[309].

The structure of the Polish Armed Forces is defined in the Act on the Universal Obligation to Defend the Republic of Poland, and detailed divisions are established in orders and decisions of the Minister of National Defense. The Polish Armed Forces consist of:

- Land Forces;
- Air Force;
- Navy;
- Special Forces;
- Territorial Defense Forces.

The Land Forces are designed to provide defense against land and air attacks in any region, on any course of action, and in the face of any form of military threat. Furthermore, they are prepared to carry out tasks arising from Poland's international security obligations. The core of the Land Forces consists of mechanized and armored cavalry divisions, airborne and air cavalry brigades, and other units of the various branches of the military, command, support, and military training. The Land Forces consist of the following branches of forces: armored and mechanized, airmobile, missile and artillery, air defense, engineering, chemical, communications, and information technology. Additionally, the Land Forces include reconnaissance and electronic warfare units and units, logistics and medical support units and units, and psychological operations and civil-military cooperation units.

The Air Force is a branch of the armed forces primarily dedicated to defending the country's airspace. It operates within the framework of the national air defense system, which is integrated with the allied system and the relevant European civil-military system. Dedicated units of the Air Force are prepared to carry out tasks arising from Poland's international obligations related to ensuring the security of NATO and European Union member states. The Air Force's core capabilities consist of tactical and transport air wings, air defense

[309] Ustawa z dnia 27 kwietnia 2007 r. o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (DzU, Nr 89, poz. 590, ze zm.).

missile brigades, and the Radio Engineering Brigade. The Air Force consists of the following branches of forces: aviation, air defense, and radio engineering. Additionally, the Air Force includes support and security units, as well as military training units.

The Navy is tasked with defending the state's interests in Polish maritime areas, maritime coastal defense, and participating in land-based coastal defense in cooperation with other branches of the armed forces as part of strategic defense operations. In accordance with international obligations, the Navy maintains the capability to carry out tasks related to ensuring security both in the Baltic Sea area and beyond. The Navy's primary mission is to defend and maintain the country's sea lines of communication during crisis and war, and to prevent a naval blockade of the country. In peacetime, the Navy supports the Border Guard's operations within territorial waters and the exclusive economic zone, primarily in combating so-called "Maritime Renegades," i.e., vessels used as targets of terrorist attacks. The core of the Navy's structure consists of flotillas of ships, the Naval Aviation Brigade, as well as shore support and security units and training centers[310].

Special Forces are designed to conduct special operations both domestically and abroad, during peacetime, crisis, and war. Conducted in conjunction with conventional forces or independently, these operations can have strategic or operational significance. The structure of the Special Forces is based on independent units and subunits composed of specially selected, trained, and equipped soldiers prepared for operations in high-risk environments, capable of achieving objectives beyond the capabilities of conventional units. The development of special units is a natural extension of modern military doctrine, which assumes the creation of highly specialized forces capable of carrying out diverse and specific tasks.

The Territorial Defense Forces (TDF) are the fifth branch of the Polish Armed Forces[311], its main mission is to defend and support local communities. Within the state security system, they combine military and non-military operations, cooperating with the public administration in times of peace, crisis, and war. The military (defense) tasks of the Territorial Defence Force include:

- Cooperating with operational forces in defending the country's territory and conducting local defense in permanent areas of responsibility (close to the soldiers' residences).

[310] Wojska Obrony terytorialnej zadania Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej – zadania w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa.
[311] Wojska Obrony terytorialnej zadania Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej – zadania w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa.

• Combating hybrid and anti-terrorist threats and protecting security-critical facilities and infrastructure.

• Civil protection: directing the population to shelters and hiding places, distributing water and food, providing medical support, securing the mobilization deployment of the entire armed forces, organizing mobilization points, ensuring security, securing and blocking gaps in operational force formations.

• Repelling enemy attacks, organizing ambushes, barrages, and other actions to delay enemy movement.

• Acting as guides for operational forces in difficult terrain;

Non-military tasks (crisis and social):

• Participating in crisis management and eliminating the effects of natural disasters (e.g., floods or storms). Conducting search and rescue operations to protect human health and life.

• Collaborating with voivodes and local governments to ensure local security. Shaping patriotic and civic attitudes in society.

• Assisting in fighting widespread fires, assisting in reaching victims of natural disasters, searching for missing persons, and isolating at-risk areas.

• Training the population in the basics of behavior in crisis situations, shaping patriotic and civic attitudes.

• Close cooperation with non-military defense systems (authorities, institutions, and the public).

• Supporting with equipment and resources, strengthening the citizen-soldier's affiliation with the local community; Traffic regulation in the operational zone: maintaining road traffic in the direct operational zone, traffic regulation and maintaining order on roads, indicating routes and providing field guides;

• Education of students, shaping patriotic and civic attitudes, defense training, increasing responsibility for defending the homeland; preparing, in cooperation with central and local government authorities, action plans for natural disasters, stockpiling supplies, and training the population; preparing action plans for the threat of war and occupation, preparing alternative plans, and practicing procedures for activating plans, The development of military technologies, especially in the areas of weaponry, electronics, cybernetics, and telecommunications, has not diminished the importance of territorial defense (TDF), and has

even forced certain changes in its perception as an equal partner with other branches of the Armed Forces in the fight against the enemy.

However, according to American data[312] territorial Defense Forces are three times cheaper, and their tasks encompass an additional state. For operational forces, there are three states: peace; crisis; war. For Territorial Defense Forces, however, these are: peace; crisis; war; occupation.

It should be emphasized that depending on local needs and capabilities, as well as accumulated resources and materials, these tasks will be performed to a greater or lesser extent. A Territorial Defense Brigade will have different road maintenance tasks, for example, in the Lublin Voivodeship, compared to a brigade in Masovia or the Zakopane area. Rescue operations will be carried out differently in the mountains than in Masuria. Brigade training will be different in areas regularly affected by floods than in areas prone to storms and gales. This applies to the entire spectrum of other threats and expectations of local society, as well as the needs resulting from the use of operational forces in specific areas. In our climate zone, floods, gales, blizzards, and, in summer, fires, landslides, heavy rains, and lightning strikes are increasingly common. Territorial Defence Forces, as a light, highly mobile formation, are an effective instrument for assisting in these threats. As a rapidly alerted element under the control of the Voivode, Territorial Defence Forces can be deployed within hours and assist vulnerable populations in crisis situations. A large number of skilled workers and specialized equipment are essential in rescuing people and property during floods.

In accordance with the provisions of the Act on the Universal Duty to Defend the Republic of Poland, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland include:[313] it also includes other organizational units. The first is the Operational Command of the Armed Forces (Article 13b of the Act), which is responsible for planning and operational command of the part of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, separated from the Land Forces, Air Force, and Navy and placed under the command of an operational commander for the conduct of operations, including abroad. The Operational Commander also performs the tasks of the Minister of National Defense in the protection of the state border in the airspace of the Republic of Poland and chairs the SAR Council, referred to in Article 47 of the Act of 9 November 2000

[312] A.M. Siarkowska, Wykorzystanie doświadczeń amerykańskiej Gwardii Narodowej w tworzeniu bezpieczeństwa Polski w XXI wieku, https://obronanarodowa.pl/artykuly/display/wykorzystanie-doswiadczen-amerykanskiej- gwardii-narodowej-w-tworzeniu-bezpieczenstwa-polski-w-xxi-wieku [dostęp 02.11.2016]

[313] Wojska Obrony terytorialnej zadania Siły Zbrojne Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej – zadania w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa.

on Maritime Security (Journal of Laws of 2006, No. 99, item 693). He defines combat capability requirements for organizational units and military units intended to be assigned to his subordination. He is responsible for training the operational command bodies of the Armed Forces, as well as their coordination with the commands of organizational units and military units intended to be assigned to his subordination. The second organizational unit is the Inspectorate for Support of the Armed Forces, which is responsible for organizing and managing the system of logistic support of the Armed Forces, including securing military units deployed or stationed outside the country, managing the process of planning and implementing tasks resulting from fulfilling the functions of the host nation (HNS) and sending country, managing territorial defense, dedicated military engineering forces and defense against weapons of mass destruction, and managing the local executive bodies of the Minister of National Defense in operational and defense matters and non-integrated government administration (Article 13c of the Act on National Defense)[314].

The organizational unit responsible for managing the medical support system of the Polish Armed Forces is the Military Health Service Inspectorate. Appointed by the Minister of National Defense, the Head of the Military Health Service Inspectorate is responsible for managing the military health service, programming the development of the medical support system, and civil-military cooperation in the medical sector. The Military Gendarmerie, as a separate and specialized service, is primarily responsible for maintaining public order on military premises and in public places, participating in the national crisis response system, participating in search, rescue, and humanitarian operations, and supporting the operations of operational forces[315]. The Warsaw Garrison Command is responsible for comprehensively preparing conditions for the efficient deployment and operation of strategic-level command posts in times of peace, crisis, and war, protecting and defending facilities, and ensuring the operation of the Ministry of National Defense and organizational units subordinate to the Minister of National Defense. Furthermore, following the announcement of mobilization, the Polish Armed Forces include the Military Counterintelligence Service and the Military Intelligence Service (Article 3 of the Opposite Command). The Armed Forces are divided into operational forces and support forces. Operational units comprise forces and assets of the armed forces, prepared to conduct joint operations at home and abroad, within NATO structures and within other international security organizations, as well as ad hoc coalitions. Depending on the

[314] https://sbn.wat.edu.pl/pdf-129783-56654?filename=ZADANIA-SIL-ZBROJNYCH-RP-.pdf
[315] Ustawa z dnia 24 sierpnia 2001 r. o Żandarmerii Wojskowej oraz wojskowych organach porządkowych (Dz.U Nr 123, poz. 1353, ze zm).

nature of their tasks, operational forces are divided into combat units: general military, airmobile, special forces, tactical aviation, air defense missile (ADM) and attack ship teams; combat support units: reconnaissance, intelligence, electronic warfare, psychological warfare, missile and artillery, air defense, chemical, engineering, radiotechnical ADM, mine countermeasures, anti-submarine warfare, and hydrographic support; and combat support units: command, communications and information technology, logistics, medical, civil-military cooperation, and other auxiliary vessels. Support forces are designed to support operational forces and perform defense tasks primarily within the country, in cooperation with non-military elements of the national defense system. They include territorial defense units, the Military Police, military administration bodies, stationary logistics units, stationary medical facilities, and other stationary support units. A key role in the defense management system of our country is played by the strategic-level command authorities of the Polish Armed Forces, which constitute an integral part of the defense management system in all states of national defense readiness. This system includes the strategic-level command and control authorities, namely the Minister of National Defense, the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. In peacetime, the President of the Republic of Poland exercises command over the Polish Armed Forces through the Minister of National Defense[316]. The Minister of National Defense directs all peacetime activities of the armed forces. He carries out his duties with the assistance of the Ministry of National Defense, which includes the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces[317].

The Polish Armed Forces in peacetime are commanded – on behalf of the Minister of National Defence – by the Chief of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, who, in terms of his function, is a soldier holding the highest military rank in active military service[318]. The principal bodies of the Polish Armed Forces' command system in peacetime are: the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces, the Operational Command of the Armed Forces, the Armed Forces Branch Commands, the Inspectorate of Armed Forces Support, the Inspectorate of the Military Health Service, the Military Gendarmerie Headquarters, and the Warsaw Garrison Command. It is worth noting that in the event of crisis situations that do not pose a direct threat to Poland's security, no significant changes to the command system of the Polish Armed Forces are planned. During a crisis, the command and control of the Polish Armed Forces is carried out according to the principles adopted in peacetime, utilizing

[316] Konstytucja RP z dnia 2 kwietnia 1997 r. – art. 135.
[317] Ustawa z dnia 14 grudnia 1995 r. o Urzędzie Ministra Obrony Narodowej (DzU z 1996 r. Nr 10 poz. 56).
[318] *Ibidem*.

the forces, resources, and procedures of the crisis management system of the Ministry of National Defense. It is fully integrated with the national and allied crisis management systems. In time of war, the Minister of National Defence manages subordinate organizational units from the Command Post of the Ministry of National Defence and serves as a planning and coordinating body for supporting and securing the activities of the Polish Armed Forces and allied forces participating in the operation to counteract and oppose armed aggression against the Republic of Poland[319].

In a defensive operation, the Armed Forces are commanded by the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces from the Command Post of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces. He commands the Armed Forces to repel armed aggression on the territory of the Republic of Poland, ensures cooperation between the forces under his command and allied forces in the planning and conduct of military operations, determines, within his jurisdiction, the Armed Forces' needs for support from the non-military component of the state's defense system, and designates military bodies to carry out tasks of the state's central and local government administration in the zone of direct military operations.

6.2. The State Defense Command Subsystem – Role and Tasks in Light of Legal Regulations

The actions of the Armed Forces in the event of an external threat to the state are regulated by the provisions of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and the Act of August 29, 2002, on Martial Law and the Powers of the Supreme Commander and the Principles of His Subordination to the Constitutional Bodies of the Republic of Poland (Martial Law Act). Pursuant to Art. Article 26, Section 1 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland serve to protect the independence of the state and the integrity of its territory, as well as to ensure the security and inviolability of its borders. The system for mobilising the Armed Forces in the event of a threat of external attack is described in the Constitution, statutes, and inter-ministerial acts issued by the Minister of National Defence. The Constitution of the Republic of Poland specifies the principles for declaring states of emergency and deciding on a state of war. The decision to declare a state of war is made by the Sejm (Article 116 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland). The decision to introduce martial law is made by the President of the Republic of Poland (Article 234 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland). Section 2 of Article 116 of the Constitution of the Republic

[319] Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia 2002 r. o stanie wojennym oraz kompetencjach Naczelnego Dowódcy i zasadach jego podległości konstytucyjnym organom Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej (Dz.U Nr 156, poz. 1301, ze zm.).

of Poland specifies that the Sejm may adopt a resolution on a state of war only in the event of an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland or when international agreements stipulate a commitment to joint defence against aggression. If the Sejm is unable to convene, the President of the Republic of Poland declares a state of war. The Sejm's decision to recognize that the Republic of Poland is in a state of war is therefore a declaratory decision, as the grounds for its issuance are specified in the Constitution. However, the Constitution of the Republic of Poland does not define what a "state of war" is. Article 116 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland states that it applies to situations where the Republic of Poland is attacked by an external enemy or when its forces are obligated to provide assistance to an allied state, for example under Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty[320]. It should be presumed that the remaining definition of a state of war stems from the doctrine of public international law. Numerous definitions contained within this doctrine indicate that war is a period in the history of states in which relations between them are conducted by the use of force.15 Therefore, it is not diplomats who participate in such relations, but rather the armed forces.

According to Article 134, Section 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the President of the Republic of Poland is the supreme commander of the Polish Armed Forces. In times of peace, the President of the Republic of Poland exercises command over the Armed Forces through the Minister of National Defense. In times of war, the President of the Republic of Poland, upon the request of the Prime Minister, appoints the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces. He may dismiss the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces in accordance with the same procedure. The powers of the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces and the principles of his subordination to the constitutional organs of the Republic of Poland are specified in the Act on Martial Law. The President of the Republic of Poland's powers, related to his command over the Armed Forces and the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, are detailed in the Acts on the Universal Obligation to Defend the Republic of Poland and on Martial Law. The National Security Council (Article 135 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland) is the President's advisory body regarding the internal and external security of the state. In the event of a direct external threat to the state, the President of the Republic of Poland, at the request of the Prime Minister, orders general or partial mobilization and use of the Armed Forces to defend the Republic of Poland (Article 136 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland). A direct threat to the state also constitutes a basis for the introduction of martial

[320] Traktat Północnoatlantycki z dnia 4 kwietnia 1949 r. (DzU z 2000 r. nr 87, poz. 970). Polska jest członkiem NATO od 12 marca 1999 r. Organizacja liczy 28 członków.

law. Pursuant to Article 2, Section 1 of the Martial Law Act, the President of the Republic of Poland may, in the event of an external threat to the state, including one caused by terrorist activities, an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or when an international agreement requires collective defense against aggression, at the request of the Council of Ministers, introduce martial law in part or throughout the entire territory of the state. Martial law is introduced by regulation. The regulation specifies the reasons for the introduction of martial law and the area covered by it, as well as the types of restrictions on human and civil rights and freedoms (Article 3 of the Martial Law Act). If, during martial law, the need to defend the state arises, this defense is directed by the President of the Republic of Poland, in cooperation with the Council of Ministers (Article 10 of the Martial Law Act). During martial law, the President of the Republic of Poland may, at the request of the Council of Ministers, decide on the transfer of public authorities to specific command positions. In the same manner, he may decide on the states of combat readiness of the Polish Armed Forces (Article 10, paragraph 2, item 2 of the Martial Law Act). Another power of the President of the Republic of Poland is the ability to appoint, at the request of the Prime Minister, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Article 10, paragraph 2, item 4 of the Martial Law Act). Upon appointment, the Commander-in-Chief assumes command of the Armed Forces and other subordinate organizational units. In carrying out his duties, he requests the President of the Republic of Poland to approve plans for the operational use of the Armed Forces and may request the President to recognize specific areas of Poland as zones of direct warfare. The Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces, in particular:

1) commands forces to repel an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland;

2) ensures cooperation between the Armed Forces subordinate to him and allied forces in the planning and conduct of military operations;

3) determines, within his jurisdiction, the needs of the Armed Forces in terms of support from the non-military component of the state's defense system;

4) appoints military bodies to carry out tasks of central and local government administration in the zone of direct warfare and defines their duties and responsibilities (Article 16 of the Martial Law Act)[321]. State administration bodies perform their duties within their existing structures until the war situation permits (Article 9 of the Martial Law Act). If this is not possible, they are replaced by military bodies. The decision in this matter is made by the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (Article 16 of the Martial Law Act). During martial

[321] https://sbn.wat.edu.pl/pdf-129783-56654?filename=ZADANIA-SIL-ZBROJNYCH-RP-.pdf

law, human and civil rights may be suspended or restricted to the extent specified by the President of the Republic of Poland in a regulation (Article 18 of the Martial Law Act). The constitutional bodies ensuring the internal security of the state are primarily the Police, the Fire Department, the Border Guard, and other services and guards. If these bodies are unable to fulfill their functions of maintaining internal order and security, soldiers of the Armed Forces may be deployed to carry out these tasks. This may be the case, for example, during a state of emergency, where the President of the Republic of Poland, at the request of the Prime Minister, may decide to deploy units and subunits of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland to restore the normal functioning of the state, if previously deployed forces and resources have been exhausted. Armed Forces units and subunits remain under the command of their superiors and carry out tasks assigned by the Minister of National Defense in consultation with the Minister of Internal Affairs. Soldiers assigned to these units and subunits have, to the extent necessary to perform their duties, the powers of police officers (Article 10 of the Act on the State of Emergency)[322]. The same applies to combating other serious threats. In the event of a threat to public security or a disruption of public order, particularly by causing:

1) a public danger to the life, health, or freedom of citizens,

2) a direct threat to property of significant size,

3) a direct threat to facilities or equipment important to state security or defense, or facilities serving as seats of state authorities,

4) a threat of a terrorist offense or its commission against facilities of particular importance to state security or defense, or which may result in a threat to human life, if the use of armed police units and subunits proves insufficient, units and subunits of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland may be used to assist the armed police units and subunits, pursuant to a decision of the President of the Republic of Poland issued at the request of the Prime Minister. Assistance may also be provided in the form of counteracting terrorist threats or crimes independently carried out by units and subunits of the Armed Forces in the event that the units and subunits of the Police do not have the capacity to effectively counteract these threats (Article 18, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Police Act)[323].

Soldiers of units and subunits of the Armed Forces dispatched to assist armed units and subunits of the Police are entitled, to the extent necessary to perform their duties, to all persons,

[322] Ustawa z dnia 21 czerwca 2002 r. o stanie wyjątkowym (DzU Nr 113, poz. 985, ze zm.).
[323] Ustawa z dnia 6 kwietnia 1990 r. o Policji (DzU z 2007 r. Nr 43, poz. 277, ze zm.).

to the powers of police officers, as defined in Articles 15-17 of the Police Act. These powers are exercised under the principles and procedures specified for police officers. Similarly, subunits of the Military Police may be deployed in the event of a threat to public security and order, if the Police forces are insufficient to perform their duties in protecting public security and order. In such a case, the Prime Minister, at the request of the Minister of Internal Affairs, in consultation with the Minister of National Defense, may order the deployment of Military Police soldiers to assist the Police (Article 18a, Section 1 of the Police Act).

Based on the provisions of Article 18 of the Act on the State of Natural Disaster, during a state of natural disaster, if the use of other forces and means is impossible or insufficient, the Minister of National Defence may place at the disposal of the voivode in whose area of operation the natural disaster occurs subunits or units of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, and direct them to perform tasks related to preventing or removing the effects of the natural disaster[324]. In such a case, subunits and units of the Polish Armed Forces remain under the command of their superiors and perform tasks specified by the voivode. The same applies in other crisis situations. If, in any other crisis situation, the use of other forces and resources is impossible or may prove insufficient, the Minister of National Defense, at the request of the voivode, may place subunits or units of the Polish Armed Forces at his disposal, directing them to perform crisis management tasks[325]. These are most often units of the Armed Forces, depending on their specialized training, in accordance with the provincial crisis management plan. Their primary tasks include:

1) participating in threat monitoring;

2) performing tasks related to assessing the effects of phenomena occurring in the threat area;

3) performing search and rescue tasks;

4) evacuating affected people and property;

5) performing tasks aimed at preparing conditions for the temporary stay of evacuated people in designated areas;

6) participating in the protection of property abandoned in the threat area;

7) isolating the threat area or the location of the rescue operation;

8) performing security, rescue, and evacuation work on threatened buildings and historical monuments;

[324] Ustawa z dnia 18 kwietnia 2002 r. o stanie klęski żywiołowej (DzU Nr 62 poz. 558, ze zm.).
[325] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia 2007 r. o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (DzU Nr 89 poz. 590, ze zm.).

9) conducting work requiring the use of specialized technical equipment or explosives held by the Polish Armed Forces; 10) removing and neutralizing hazardous materials, using the resources and assets of the Polish Armed Forces;

11) eliminating chemical contamination and biological contamination and infections;

12) removing radioactive contamination;

13) performing tasks related to the repair and reconstruction of technical infrastructure;

14) participating in ensuring the operability of communication routes;

15) providing medical assistance and performing sanitary, hygienic, and anti-epidemic tasks (Article 25, Section 3 of the Crisis Management Act).

Armed Forces units may be placed at the disposal of the Voivode as full-time staff or as ad hoc task forces. Coordination of their participation in the implementation of tasks, depending on the area of threat, is ensured by the administrative authorities to which these units are assigned. These authorities delegate all tasks exclusively to the commanders of these units. The command of Armed Forces units is governed by the principles set forth in military regulations and procedures in force within the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. The deployment of Armed Forces units in a crisis situation must not jeopardize their ability to perform tasks arising from the Constitution of the Republic of Poland and ratified international agreements (Article 25, Section 9 of the Crisis Management Act).

6.3. Operations of the Polish Armed Forces in the context of implementing tasks arising from international agreements concluded by Poland

The most important tasks for the Armed Forces arising from international agreements are set forth in the United Nations Charter of June 26, 1945[326], North Atlantic Treaty of 4 April 1949 and the Maastricht Treaty on European Union of 7 February 1992[327]. According to Article 1 of the UN Charter, one of the primary functions of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, with the right to take collective action to prevent and eliminate threats to peace and to suppress acts of aggression or other threats to peace. All members of this organization must assist in any preventive or repressive action taken by it in accordance with the Charter and refrain from providing assistance to a state against which the UN has taken action (Article 2 of the UN Charter). The General Assembly has the authority to establish general principles of cooperation for the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as principles and guidelines for disarmament and the regulation of armaments. It may

[326] Karta Narodów Zjednoczonych z dnia 26 czerwca 1945 r. (DzU z 1947 r. Nr 23, poz. 90).
[327] Traktat z Maastricht o Unii Europejskiej z dnia 7 lutego 1992 r. (DzU z 2004 r. Nr 90 poz. 864)

also make recommendations to members or to the Security Council. The Security Council bears primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. The principles for action in connection with threats to the peace, breaches of the peace, and acts of aggression are regulated in Articles 39-54 of the UN Charter. According to these regulations, the UN Security Council shall determine the existence of circumstances threatening the peace, giving rise to a breach of the peace, or an act of aggression, and shall make recommendations or decide what measures should be taken to maintain or restore international peace and security. It may also call upon the parties to comply with such provisional measures as it deems necessary or desirable. These may be rules not involving the use of armed force, which may be applied to ensure the effectiveness of its decisions. It may also request the Members of the United Nations to apply such measures. These rules may include the complete or partial interruption of economic relations and means of communication: rail, sea, air, postal, telegraphic, radio, and other means of communication, as well as the severance of diplomatic relations. If the Security Council deems these measures to be inadequate, it may take action by air, sea, or land forces to maintain or restore international peace and security. Such action may include demonstrations, blockades, and other operations by air, sea, or land forces of Members of the United Nations. In order to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, Members of the United Nations are obligated by agreements to provide the Security Council with armed forces, assistance, and facilities, including rights of passage, necessary for the maintenance of international peace and security. Such agreement or agreements shall specify the number and type of armed forces, their level of readiness and general disposition, and the type of facilities and assistance to be provided. When the Security Council decides to use force, before requesting a Member not represented on it to provide armed forces, it shall invite that Member, if it so requests, to participate in Security Council decisions regarding the use of the contingent of armed forces provided by that Member. To enable the United Nations to apply urgent military measures, Members of the United Nations are obligated to hold national air force contingents for international enforcement action ready for immediate use.

The strength and level of readiness of these contingents and their combined action plans shall be determined by the Security Council, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee, within the limits specified in a special agreement or agreements. The Military Staff Committee shall be responsible to the Security Council for the strategic direction of all armed forces placed at the disposal of the Security Council. Action necessary to carry out the decisions of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security shall be taken

by all Members of the United Nations, or by any of them, as the Security Council may decide. Such decisions shall be implemented by Members of the United Nations directly as well as through their action in the appropriate international organizations of which they are members. The Polish Armed Forces have participated in various United Nations missions, depending on the political decisions of our governments. Among the most well-known and long-lasting missions are UNDOF in the Golan Heights and UNIFIL in Lebanon[328]. Under Article 1 of the North Atlantic Treaty of 4 April 1949, the Parties undertake, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, to settle any international disputes in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace, security, and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations. To more effectively achieve the purposes of the Treaty, the Parties undertake to maintain and develop, through continuous and effective mutual assistance, their individual and collective capacity to resist armed attack (Article 3 of the Treaty). The Parties agreed in the Treaty that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all and agreed that, if such an armed attack occurs, each of them, in exercise of the right of individual or collective self-defense recognized by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, will assist the party or parties so attacked by taking forthwith, individually and in concert with the other Parties, such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force, to restore and maintain the security of the North Atlantic area (Article 5 of the Treaty). Any such armed attack and all measures taken by NATO member states as a result thereof shall be immediately notified to the Security Council. Such measures shall be terminated as soon as the Security Council has taken the action necessary to restore and maintain international peace and security. In accordance with the provisions of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union of 7 February 1992, the Union defines and implements a common foreign and security policy, covering all areas of foreign and security policy, the objectives of which are: 1) to safeguard the common values, fundamental interests, independence and integrity of the Union, in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter; 2) to strengthen the Union's security in all its forms; 3) to preserve peace and strengthen international security in accordance with the principles

[328] UNDOF – Rada Bezpieczeństwa ONZ, dążąc do zapewnienia pokoju pomiędzy Izraelem i Syrią 31.05.1974 r., przyjęła rezolucję nr 350/74 o utworzeniu Sił Rozdzielająco-Obserwacyjnych Narodów Zjednoczonych, UNDOF (ang. United Nations Disengagement Observer Forces). UNIFIL – 19 marca 1978 r. Rada Bezpieczeństwa ONZ przyjęła rezolucję Nr 425 wzywającą Izrael do przestrzegania integralności terytorialnej i bezwarunkowego wycofania się z okupowanego terytorium Libanu. Tego samego dnia powołano Tymczasowe Siły Narodów Zjednoczonych w Libanie (ang. United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon).

of the United Nations Charter and the Helsinki Final Act and the objectives of the Charter of Paris, including those regarding external borders; 4) to promote international cooperation; and 5) to develop and consolidate democracy and the rule of law, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Union's decision-making body, the European Council, defines the principles and general guidelines of the common foreign and security policy, including matters with defence implications. The Council adopts joint actions. These actions address certain situations in which operational action is necessary. Joint actions shall define their scope, objectives, scope, and the means to be made available to the Union, the conditions for their implementation, and, where necessary, their duration. The common foreign and security policy shall encompass all matters relating to the security of the Union, including the progressive framing of a common defense policy, which could lead to a common defense, if the European Council so decides. In such a case, the European Council recommends that Member States take decisions in accordance with their respective constitutional requirements. The European Union respects the specific nature of the security and defense policies of certain Member States, including the obligations of Member States under the North Atlantic Treaty, which consider their common defense to be carried out within the framework of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization – humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping missions, and crisis management missions, including peacemaking.

In conclusion, it should be stated that the Polish Armed Forces fit well into the National Defense System. They successfully carry out their tasks stemming from Article 26 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. In recent years, following the period of systemic transformation, changes have also been made to the structure and tasks of the Armed Forces. These changes primarily involved reducing and modernizing them, as well as adapting their tasks to the requirements of defense agreements within the North Atlantic Treaty and the European Union. The process of organizational and competency transformation continues. Currently working teams, appointed by the Minister of National Defense, are required to develop concepts for introducing changes to military command and staff structures so that they are capable of carrying out state security tasks during military crisis and war. These concepts should also take into account the Armed Forces' implementation of tasks related to internal crises within the country. Therefore, along with structural changes, the provisions of the laws governing the participation of the Armed Forces in military and non-military crisis situations

within the country should be adapted to the specific operations of their units and subunits. In particular, adjustments should be made to the laws on the Police, on states of emergency, on natural disasters, and on crisis management. Primarily, the principles of using weapons and other armaments, as well as the command system in these situations, should be adapted to the specific needs of the Armed Forces. This process is lengthy, but necessary, as the likelihood of the Armed Forces' involvement in crisis situations is increasing due to the civilizational development of the Republic of Poland following its accession to the European Union and the opening of the European Union to the countries of the former USSR in Eastern Europe.

6.4. Police – Functions and Tasks in the National Security System

The prevention and combating of phenomena posing a threat to Poland's security is entrusted to bodies and institutions, often specialized units. Protecting national security in all its aspects is the responsibility of, among others, the Internal Security Agency, the Central Anticorruption Bureau, the Military Intelligence Service, the Armed Forces, the Police, the Military Gendarmerie, the Road Transport Inspectorate, the Prison Service, and the Border Guard. One of the formations operating within the state security system is the Police. It is a uniformed and armed formation, constituting a key pillar of the internal security subsystem within the Polish national security system. In conditions of direct external threats and war, the Polish Police – as an armed formation – undergoes a process of militarization and becomes an integral part of the state's defense system, supporting the Polish Armed Forces, civil defense, and public administration. It is important to remember that in times of danger, the Police:

- maintain public safety and order in threatened zones and behind the front lines;
- protect unattended property and combat looters;
- ensure the continued operation of critical infrastructure.

In terms of logistical and population support, the Police:

- assist in the evacuation of civilians and direct road traffic on main evacuation and transit routes;
- cooperate with rescue and humanitarian services;

• transmit alert and warning messages to the public.

The Police's duties in peacetime also include protecting human life, health, and property, as well as maintaining public safety and order. The general nature of the Police's duties is defined in Article 1, Section 1 of the Police Act. This Article states that the Police is a force serving society and designated to protect human safety and maintain public safety and order[329]. The terms used here are very difficult to precisely define. The very term "serving society" describes the Police's subservient role towards society as a whole and each individual. Society's needs change, new ones emerge, or grow, and consequently, the scope of the Police's activities will also change. The linguistic interpretation of Article 1, Section 1 indicates that any matter serving society should be the responsibility of the Police[330]. In practice, this is impossible to implement and even dangerous for the state and its democracy, hence the duties serving society are also assigned to other entities. It should be assumed that the legislator's intention was to define the role of the Police within the state. This statement emphasizes the essence of the Police's activities. Although it is an armed and uniformed formation, which would indicate a military nature, its purpose is to serve the state and, at the same time, society. The Police is the formation with the broadest range of tasks and powers. It undertakes and organizes actions aimed at preventing the commission of offenses and crimes, as well as manifestations of criminogenic behavior, including cooperation with state, social, and local government bodies. According to B. Hołyst, for the Police to properly fulfill its duties, it must be serviceable and open to the public, while also being effective. The Police is a formal organization and operates continuously within a precisely defined scope of competence. Its activities are directed at a wide audience. It differs from other security services in that it represents state authority[331]. In Polish law, the term "police" has two meanings:

• objective, encompassing the sphere of state activity related to the use of coercion against certain institutions and individuals; and

• subjective, meaning specific groups of people whose task is to protect the constitutional system of the state and ensure public security and order.

[329] Ustawa o Policji z 6 kwietnia 1990 r. (tekst jedn. Dz.U. z 2007 r. Nr 34, poz.277 ze zm.), s. 6.
[330] *Ibidem*, s. 8.
[331] B. Hołyst, Policja na świecie, LexisNexis, Warszawa 2011, s. 123.

The police also perform tasks arising from international agreements and treaties, under the terms and conditions specified therein. The legislator stipulates that these are fundamental duties, meaning that this is treated as an open-ended list. This clearly indicates that it is virtually impossible to specify situations in which the police cannot take action, provided that these actions are aimed at maintaining public security and order. The law also lists the maintenance of peace in public places as part of this protection[332]. The pursuit of systematizing Police tasks can be implemented through a subordinate system. These subordinate units are the Police organizational units, which serve as auxiliary bodies to the Police institution, including: the Police Headquarters, provincial police headquarters, district police headquarters, municipal police headquarters, independent anti-terrorist subunits, and independent prevention subunits. The precise tasks of individual organizational units are defined by the Police Commander-in-Chief based on the statutory authorization contained in Article 7, paragraph 1, item 1 of the Police Act. For example, in Order No. 25 of the Police Commander-in-Chief of December 31, 2002, regarding detailed principles of organization and scope of operations of police headquarters, police stations, and other organizational units (Journal of Laws of the Police Headquarters of 2003, No. 2, item 4, as amended), Chapter 3 of the Chief Commander, while defining the scope of activities for individual units, also specifies their specific tasks. Among the forty-six tasks assigned to the Police Headquarters, in addition to those related to creating conditions for the proper performance of statutory police duties, are those specified in Article 1 of the Police Act. The intention of the Chief Commander of the Police to establish an exhaustive, closed set of tasks for police headquarters and other police units, as recognized by the Chief Commander, is extremely difficult to implement. A detailed analysis of the operational scope of individual units reveals the omission of a number of issues. For example, the omission of tasks related to the protection of public safety and order in all public places for prevention units. Given the dynamic nature of social life and the increasingly emerging range of threats affecting public safety and order, excessive detail and the isolation of closed sets of duties for police units can sometimes limit their scope of action. Police tasks encompass a variety of areas, encompassing not only administrative but also criminal matters.

The dynamic geopolitical changes associated with the beginning of the process of shaping a new international system in the early 1990s were crucial for the intensification of integration processes on the European continent. The capitalist states that make up the

[332] *Ibidem*, s. 131-132.

European Community, influenced by the fundamental political shift in Europe, intensified their efforts to create a new dimension in the form of the European Union.

It is important to remember the importance of police cooperation within Interpol (the International Criminal Police Organization) in the fight against international crime, which is based on a global network of National Bureaus (NCBs). In Poland, this role is performed by the International Police Cooperation Bureau at the Police Headquarters in Warsaw, ensuring 24/7 secure information exchange, tracking down criminals, and combating cross-border crime. It is worth noting that Interpol, an organization established in 1923, is the oldest and most important framework for international police cooperation, and after the United Nations, it is the second largest cross-border organization in the world. INTERPOL was founded by the International Criminal Police Commission, established in September 1923 in Vienna at the International Criminal Police Congress. In 1946, during a conference in Brussels, the International Criminal Police Commission was reactivated (the name "INTERPOL" was first used) and its headquarters moved to Paris. Ten years later (1956), the Commission adopted the name International Criminal Police Organization – INTERPOL. At that time, its Statute was also adopted, which is the fundamental legal act regulating the functioning of the Organization and its Members. From the outset, the mission of the International Criminal Police Organization – INTERPOL has been to assist law enforcement agencies in combating all forms of crime, including through technologically advanced communications infrastructure, technical and operational support. Currently, INTERPOL's activities focus on combating organized crime, terrorism, and cybercrime, but using the INTERPOL channel, economic crime, human trafficking, child sex crime, illicit trade in cultural property, and environmental crime are prevented and combated. Actions are also taken to build the capacity of police services in the field of new technologies and innovations. Cooperation within INTERPOL is based on a network of National Bureaux. INTERPOL (one in each member country), connected 24 hours a day by the secure I-24/7 communication system. INTERPOL's activities are coordinated by the General Secretariat in Lyon, which operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, as the central contact point foR each INTERPOL National Bureau (KBI). Cooperation within INTERPOL is conducted in four official languages: English, French, Spanish, and Arabic the Polish Police has been present in international police structures since 1923, when its representatives participated in the founding congress of the International Criminal Police Commission[333].

[333] https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Our-history

In 1952, due to political circumstances, Poland severed all contacts with INTERPOL, although it never formally withdrew. Membership was resumed in 1990, and from that point on, Poland was once again recognized by the international community as a full member of the Organization. Thanks to its membership in INTERPOL, the Polish Police gained access to the Organization's databases, among other things, as well as a modern, computerized system for exchanging information with a global reach. Through this network, the Polish Police can communicate with law enforcement agencies in other countries without unnecessary delays and process information. As a member of INTERPOL, it can also share, exchange, and gain experience in combating crime during international conferences and training sessions organized by the Organization. It is also important to note that, based on agreements concluded by the Commander-in-Chief of the Police, INTERPOL resources are also used by the Border Guard, the Internal Security Agency, the Central Anticorruption Bureau, the Foreign Intelligence Agency, the State Protection Service, and the National Revenue Administration. In 1923, the Organizations were founded by 24 countries. In 1967, INTERPOL had 100 member states. Currently, INTERPOL has 195 member states and is the world's largest and most well-known international police organization, an important forum for police cooperation, especially among states outside the European Union. With the increasing industrialization of Europe and North America and the acceleration of social mobility at the beginning of the 20th century, the police focused on a new breed of perpetrators: those operating internationally. International cooperation in criminal law enforcement was limited to submitting formal extradition requests through diplomatic channels. To actively pursue criminal prosecutions of internationally operating criminals, police forces in Europe and beyond decided to respond with increased force. In 1914, the first international congress of criminal police officers was held in Monaco, where the first proposal for international sets of laws and unified extradition procedures was put forward. After a break caused by World War I, the issue of cooperation was revisited at the Second International Criminal Police Congress in 1923 in Vienna. This congress, attended by 138 delegates from 17 countries – primarily European – concluded on September 7, 1923, with the establishment of the International Criminal Police Commission, headquartered in Vienna, whose primary task was to exchange information on criminals operating in European territory. The Commission was established as follows:

1. Collecting information on international criminals and maintaining a register of their modus operandi – maintaining a collection of signal photographs and a register of fingerprints;

2. Using the collected documentation to disseminate information on criminals among member states, publishing an international review of criminal police issues, and preparing an annual report[334]. The Commission's intention was to guarantee mutual and extensive cooperation within the scope of applicable legal norms, as well as to develop methods for combating crime. During the congress, it was emphasized that the newly established organization would deal exclusively with criminal offenses, without interfering in matters of political, religious, or racial connotation. World War II again interrupted the Commission's activities; a year after its end, the General Assembly of the Commission was held in Brussels. The ICPO's new headquarters was to be in Paris, and from 1989 in Lyon. In 1956, the organization received its official name: International Criminal Police Organization (ICPO). However, it is known worldwide as Interpol, which is an acronym for International Police[335].

The Polish Police has been present in international police structures since 1923. As a result of its membership in Interpol, the Polish Police has gained access to rich data sets and a modern, computerized global information system. Interpol member states come from every continent, making it the largest police organization in the world[336]. The ICPO's primary mission is to ensure that all member states can participate in the exchange of information related to specific cases. Interpol's goals have remained unchanged since its inception, including the broadest possible mutual assistance between all criminal police units, within the limits of applicable national laws and in an atmosphere of respect for human rights[337]. The ICPO's jurisdiction covers all types of crime. This limitation excludes crimes committed with political, military, religious, or racial motives. This limitation stems from the fact that the legal systems, cultural levels, economic systems, and political circumstances of member states differ significantly, and some states simply do not consent to interference in their internal affairs.

The legal basis for Interpol's work is the Statute adopted in 1956 during the 25th session of the General Assembly in Vienna. Other important documents governing ICPO's work include the General Regulations, the Standards of Practice for National Interpol Bureaux, and the Financial Regulations. According to Article 5 of the Interpol Statute, the organization consists

[334] I. Gawłowicz, M. A. Wasilewska, *Międzynarodowa współpraca w walce z przestępczością*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, Szczecin 2004. s. 66-67.
[335] Ibidem, s. 68.
[336] T. Kurkowska-Krutki, *Wymiana informacji policyjnych: systemy Interpolu i Schengen*, CSP Legionowo, Legionowo 1993, s. 41.
[337] W. Ignaczak, A. Walc, A. Romancewicz, *Współdziałanie z policjami innych krajów*, WSPol, Szczytno 2009, s. 23.

of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, the General Secretariat, the National Central Bureaux, and advisors. The highest and most influential body of ICPO is the annual General Assembly[338]. The Assembly meets periodically. Decisions are made in the form of resolutions or recommendations, sometimes by majority vote. Each member state has one vote in the Assembly. The Assembly decides on the following matters:

• defining the organization's overarching activities;

• establishing the work program for the coming year;

• determining financial policy, including budget reconciliation;

• approving agreements with other organizations;

• defining standards and procedures for the mutual relations between Interpol members;

• electing the organization's governing bodies.

The Interpol Executive Committee is headed by the President and three Vice-Presidents, elected for a four-year term. The Executive Committee's role is to monitor the implementation of the General Assembly's decisions and oversee the work of the General Secretariat. Interpol continually seeks new cooperation partners to address the changing demands of transnational crime. In addition to existing cooperation with the UN and Europol, the aim is to establish the closest possible collaboration with the European Union, ASEAN, ASEANAPOL, and Ameripol. Interpol holds a very important position in international crime prevention, despite constantly changing framework conditions. There are many police cooperation needs, and Interpol will be a valuable resource.

Another very important international organization with which the Polish Police cooperates is EUROPOL, the European Police Office. It is a European police agency based in The Hague. Europol was established on July 1, 1999[339]. Europol's most important tasks include:

[338] A. Szumski, *Interpol jako organizacja międzynarodowa, [w:] Nowa kodyfikacja prawa karnego, nr 2786,* red. Bogunia L., Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 2005, s. 41.
[339] M. Płachta, Europol, [w:] „Gdańskie studia prawnicze 2003 (11)", Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 2003, s. 144.

• improving the effectiveness of operations and cooperation between member state authorities in preventing, investigating, and combating organized and international crime;

• internationalizing police services;

• improving dialogue between police forces in individual member states to develop common policies on preventive measures and techniques for detecting and investigating specific crimes.

Europol's mission is to provide assistance to relevant services handling criminal cases in European Union countries. Pursuant to the Council Decision of 6 April 2009 establishing the European Police Office, Europol officers may participate in all activities of a joint investigation team and exchange information with all its members, within the limits provided for in Member State law. However, they may not participate in activities involving the use of coercive measures. Europol's subsidiary role is fulfilled through the provision of information, analytical work, technological assistance, and the training it organizes. The European Police Office is an interdisciplinary organization. It brings together not only regular police officers but also customs, immigration, and tax police officers. This allows for the expansion of cooperation from criminal law to financial and tax crimes. Europol is not an autonomous agency. Its mission is limited to cooperation, which can be implemented through technical cooperation and training, strategic cooperation, and cooperation in the exchange of personal data, database protection, and security. Europol is a hierarchical agency, although its organization is not overly complex. Europol's organs are the Management Board and the Director, appointed unanimously by the Council of the European Union. He is accompanied by three deputies. The term of office of the Director and his deputies is four years, renewable once for a four-year period. The Director reports to the Management Board, which comprises representatives of the Member States and a representative of the Commission. Europol reports to the EU Justice and Home Affairs Council[340]. In the fight against organized crime, the European police force's primary efforts focus on cases involving drug trafficking, illegal immigrant smuggling networks, illegal vehicle trafficking, human trafficking, and counterfeiting of currency and securities. Europol is also implementing new technologies in the form of IT systems that streamline the flow of data necessary for conducting procedural activities by national criminal investigation authorities. Europol employs several hundred people at its headquarters in The Hague, as well as liaison

[340] file:///C:/Users/WSEI/Downloads/articles-2153226.pdf.pdf

officers. The agency's size stems from its constant contact with hundreds of law enforcement organizations, each of which has its own unit supporting Europol's activities. Currently, the agency cooperates with all European Union Member States, as well as with non-EU partner countries (Australia, Canada, the USA, and Norway). Europol's goal is to improve the effectiveness and cooperation between the competent authorities of member states in preventing and combating international organized crime. Europol is a multidisciplinary organization, encompassing not only regular police officers but also members of member state law enforcement agencies, such as customs and immigration officers. Europol also helps overcome language barriers in international police cooperation. Any officer from a member state law enforcement agency can submit questions in their native language to their national Europol unit and receive a response in the same language.

In 2004, Poland became a full member of Europol. Since October 3, 2001, the Polish Police and Border Guard have been merely associated with Europol. Upon accession to the European Union on May 1, 2004, they automatically became members of the organization. This formalization only occurred after the ratification of the Europol Convention and its additional protocols at the end of 2004. In Poland, the National Europol Unit is served by the National Police Headquarters. Poland was the only new member state to be offered the leadership of a Europol task force. The European Police Office reports to the Council of Ministers of Justice and Home Affairs of the European Union, which oversees its activities and issues appropriate recommendations. It appoints the Director and approves and controls the budget of the European Police Office. Europol is financed from the European Union budget. A spectacular example of effective cooperation with Europol in the fight against organized crime is the dismantling of an international criminal group involved in the distribution of counterfeit euro banknotes across multiple EU countries. Polish law enforcement agencies, working closely with Europol, arrested numerous suspects[341]. Attempts to thoroughly define police efficiency measures and develop effective methods for their use have been undertaken numerous times and remain a challenge requiring a systematic solution. Previously used measures, based on statistical data, typically assessed individual units in terms of their achieved results, without linking them to the comprehensive material or human resources expenditures incurred. Of course, due to the varying status of individual units, in order to achieve relatively objective results, a personnel conversion factor was most often used, taking into account the

[341] *Ibidem,* s. 150

workload of a single full-time position within a given service, rather than the total expenditures incurred.

Assessing the efficiency of a police unit can be considered from at least two perspectives. The first concerns external efficiency, related to the impact of the police unit's activities on its socio-institutional environment. This type of efficiency should be considered actual, functional efficiency, related to the operational efficiency of the police unit. The second aspect concerns internal efficiency, related to internal assessments of the organizational system's functioning, taking into account, on the one hand, structural and organizational solutions, and, on the other, procedures and standards governing operations. This type of efficiency can be linked to economic and non-economic assessments. The basis for assessing the external efficiency of the Police can be the degree of completion of statutory tasks that police units must perform. In practice, internal evaluation of a police unit's efficiency comes down to the assessment of individual officers' work by their superiors. Although it is not without its inherent biases based on the superior's subjectivity, it must be stated that the immediate superior of a police officer is best placed to assess the workload and results achieved. Poorly constructed measures used to date often led to pathologies. These manifested themselves in various ways, most often involving actions aimed at achieving a quick end result, which often came at the expense of rational, from a professional perspective, task execution. The use of such measures usually had the opposite effect to the intended one and contributed to a decline in the unit's well-understood operational efficiency. In external evaluation, which should be understood as a public sense of security, the primary emphasis is also placed on the final results of police work. However, while internal evaluations may attempt to be objective, external evaluations appear to be merely subjective perceptions of individual citizens. Although internal evaluations have not addressed the costs incurred for the reasons previously outlined, in external evaluations, the public appears to be entirely uninterested in the costs incurred by the police, but only in the results achieved. A police unit's performance can be assessed on three levels:

1. The level of objectives achieved – the assessment of police performance can be successfully based on the criterion of effectiveness;

2. The method of achieving objectives – the achievement of objectives from the perspective of applicable law, procedures, and internal regulations;

3. The costs of the activity – the use of human and material resources, as well as financial outlays to achieve the objectives. Due to the fact that the effectiveness of a police unit is influenced by many different variables, efforts should be made to develop a multi-criteria system evaluation concept, the effectiveness of which would be a function of various groups of evaluation criteria, encompassing as many aspects of operation as possible that are most important from the perspective of theoretical premises and empirical research. On the one hand, a multi-criteria system for the evaluation of a police unit should reflect the impact of individual variables on the effectiveness of the organization, and on the other hand, it should be normative in nature, manifesting itself in defining the values that the organization must achieve to be effective[342].

6.5. Protection System: Border Guard – Tasks in Peacetime and Wartime

The Border Guard is a unified, uniformed, and armed force designed to protect the state border, control border traffic, and prevent and counteract illegal migration[343]. It was established under the Act of 12 October 1990 on the Border Guard[344]. The newly established police service began its operations on May 16, 1991. This date also marked the formal disbandment of the Border Protection Troops. Under the aforementioned Act, the Border Guard was entrusted with the protection of the state border on land and sea, as well as the control of border traffic. Border protection undoubtedly constitutes one of the key tasks in ensuring national security. In peacetime, the Border Guard reports to the Ministry of Interior and Administration and ensures the inviolability of borders, traffic control, and the fight against illegal migration. After the announcement of mobilization and during wartime, the formation may be militarized and placed under the Ministry of National Defense, carrying out defense tasks and supporting the Armed Forces[345]. The Border Guard's tasks in peacetime include:

- Border Protection: Securing the state border on land and sea.

- Traffic Control: Checking persons and vehicles at border crossings and issuing visas.

[342] S. Kownacki, *Miary efektywności organizacji, [w:] Problemy Organizacji 1976*, nr 2, Warszawa 1976, s.67
[343] https://sip.lex.pl/akty-prawne/dzu-dziennik-ustaw/straz-graniczna-16793876/art-1
[344] Dz.U. 2011r., nr 116, poz. 675 t.j ze zm.
[345] https://sip.lex.pl/akty-prawne/dzienniki-resortowe/zmiana-wytycznych-w-sprawie-szczegolowych-warunkow-i-trybu-39018727

• Combating Crime: Prosecuting perpetrators of smuggling, human trafficking, and illegal border crossings.

• Foreigner Safety: Monitoring the legality of foreigners' stay and employment within the country.

The Border Guard's Tasks in Wartime:

• Militarization of the Force: Officers become soldiers in military service by operation of law (based on the provisions on the defense of the homeland);

• Change of Subordination: Transferring to the authority of the Minister of National Defense;

• Army Support: Protecting the military rear, participating in security and control tasks in the border zone;

• Maintaining Order: Preventing sabotage, controlling the flow of refugees, and protecting key transport infrastructure.

In the historical context, it's worth recalling that both the Border Guard and the Border Protection Troops it replaced are not the only formations to have performed this task in our country over the past hundred years. After Poland regained independence, the first border formations were established in the reborn Polish state in 1918[346]. The Border Guard was established in 1928. Its structure included district and border inspectorates, police stations, and border posts. Among its tasks were combating illegal border crossings, illegal goods and passenger traffic in border waters, protecting public safety, and preventing threats to state interests[347]. After the end of World War II, border security was initially the responsibility of military units. By order of the Supreme Commander of the Polish Army on September 13, 1945, the Border Protection Troops were established. The main tasks of this formation included preventing and combating border crime and ensuring security and public order in the border zone. Despite numerous reorganizations, the Border Protection Troops remained a purely

[346] A. Pyrkosz, D. Tokarczyk, *Pierwsze formacje graniczne Polski niepodległej*, Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej 2008, nr 2.
[347] A. Banaszkiewicz, W. Bochenek, *Przeszłość i teraźniejszość Straży Granicznej, Poznań 2011*, s. 24 i n.; J. Majewski, *Straż Graniczna [w:], Instytucje bezpieczeństwa narodowego,* red. M. Paździor, B. Szmulik, Warszawa 2012, s. 202.

military formation throughout its existence. Their disbandment was dictated by the socio-political changes that occurred in Poland at the end of the 20th century[348]. In the current reality, the reform resulted in the creation of a police and administrative formation, designed to meet the new challenges of ensuring security and border protection. The newly established Border Guard, with its name, harkened back to the traditions of the border services of the interwar period. Its organizational structure largely mirrored that of the Border Protection Troops, after which the barracks and administrative facilities were adapted[349]. Pursuant to the "Act on the Border Guard" (hereinafter referred to as the Act), the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard is the central government administration body subordinate to the minister responsible for internal affairs (Article 3, paragraph 1 of the Act)[350]. The Commander-in-Chief is appointed and dismissed by the Prime Minister at the request of the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Deputy Commanders-in-Chief of the Border Guard are appointed and dismissed by the Minister of Internal Affairs at the request of the Commander-in-Chief (Article 3, paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Act). The Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard performs his duties with the assistance of his subordinate office – the Border Guard Headquarters (Article 5a, paragraph 1 of the Act). The Border Guard Headquarters consists of the following organizational units:

• Border Management – supervises and coordinates the performance of tasks by local Border Guard bodies;

• Foreigners' Affairs – handles matters within the competence of the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard, arising from international agreements and European Union law in the area of migration and asylum policy;

• Operational and Investigative Management – conducts activities, among other things, to identify and counter terrorist threats; • Staff of the Border Guard Commander-in-Chief – provides support to the Border Guard Commander-in-Chief and his deputies in the decision-making process; • International Cooperation Office – coordinates international cooperation within the Border Guard; • Personnel and Training Office – implements the personnel and training policy of the Border Guard Commander-in-Chief; • Legal Office – provides legal

[348] M. Ilnicki, *Służby graniczne w walce z terroryzmem. Polskie warunki ustrojowo-prawne*, Toruń 2011, s. 118; D. Magierek, *Rola Straży Granicznej w zapewnieniu bezpieczeństwa Polski (1990 – 2004*), Toruń 2011, s. 45 i n.
[349] R. Sudoł, *Usytuowanie Straży Granicznej w prawie polskim [w:], Zadania administracji rządowej i organów samorządu terytorialnego w zakresie bezpieczeństwa państwa i porządku publicznego*, red. W. S. Kucharski, Lublin 2009, s. 36.
[350] Zob. art. 3 ust. 1 ustawy w brzmieniu ustalonym przez art. 470 pkt 2 projektu ustawy o cudzoziemcach (druk nr 1526).

assistance, among other things, to the Border Guard Commander-in-Chief; • Internal Affairs Office of the Border Guard – identifies, prevents, and detects threats to the performance of the Border Guard's statutory duties; • Supervision and Control Inspectorate – conducts, among other things, inspections of organizational units of the Border Guard; • Finance Office – supervises, among other things, budget projects and financial settlements; • Communications and IT Office – organizes and manages, for example, ICT systems and networks, technical monitoring, and emergency power supply to ensure the efficient implementation of the Border Guard's statutory duties; • Office of Technology and Supply – among other things, collaborates with organizational units of the Border Guard in the implementation of construction investment projects; • Office of Classified Information Protection – among other things, ensures the protection of classified information at the National Headquarters and the physical security of its facilities[351].

The local authorities of the Border Guard are: commanders of Border Guard units, posts, and divisions. The commander of a unit is appointed and dismissed by the minister responsible for internal affairs at the request of the Commander-in-Chief. Deputy commanders of a unit are appointed and dismissed by the Commander-in-Chief at the request of the unit commander. The commander of a post and division is appointed and dismissed by the Commander-in-Chief at the request of the unit commander (see Art. 5 sec. 1, 2, 5 of the Act). Commanders of Border Guard units, posts, and divisions perform their duties with the assistance of: subordinate offices. These are, respectively, commands of units, posts, and divisions (see Art. 5a sec. 2 of the Act). In the organizational structure of the Border Guard, units constitute the basic, independent organizational unit, protecting the state border within one or, as a rule, two bordering voivodeships[352]. Border Guard units are established and abolished by way of a regulation issued by the minister responsible for internal affairs (see art. 6 sec. 1 of the Act). In turn, outposts and divisions are established and abolished by way of a regulation issued by the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard, who also specifies their territorial scope of operation (see art. 6 sec. 1 item 1 of the Act). In light of the regulation of the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration of 24 March 2011 on the establishment of Border Guard units[353]. The currently operating Border Guard units include:

[351] http://www.strazgraniczna.pl
[352] Por. A. Wawrzusiszyn, op. cit., s. 90.
[353] Dz.U. nr 69, poz. 370 ze zm.

• The Bieszczady Border Guard Unit, headquartered in Przemyśl, covers the Podkarpackie Voivodeship;

• The Maritime Border Guard Unit, headquartered in Gdańsk, covers the Pomeranian Voivodeship, West Pomeranian Voivodeship, and the Elbląg County, the city with county rights of Elbląg, and the Frombork Commune in Braniewo County, as well as Polish maritime areas specified in separate regulations[354];

• The Bug River Border Guard Unit, headquartered in Chełm, covers the Lublin Voivodeship and Łosice County, part of the Masovian Voivodeship; • The Odra River Border Guard Unit, headquartered in Krosno Odrzańskie, covers the Lower Silesian, Lubusz, and Greater Poland Voivodeships[355];

• The Vistula Border Guard Unit, based in Warsaw, covers the Kuyavian-Pomeranian, Łódź, Świętokrzyskie, and Masovian Voivodeships, excluding Łosice County;

• The Podlasie Border Guard Unit, based in Białystok, covers the Podlaskie Voivodeship;

• The Silesian-Lesser Poland Border Guard Unit, based in Racibórz, covers the Lesser Poland, Opole, and Silesian Voivodeships.[356];

• The Warmia-Masuria Border Guard Unit, based in Kętrzyn, covers the Warmian-Masurian Voivodeship, excluding Elbląg County, the city with county rights of Elbląg, and Braniewo County of the Frombork commune, as well as the internal waters of the Vistula Lagoon.

It should be noted that pursuant to the Regulation of the Minister of Interior and Administration of March 6, 2013, on the abolition of certain Border Guard units and amending

[354] Wskazany zasięg terytorialny działania Morskiego Oddziału Straży Granicznej zgodnie z rozporządzeniem Ministra Spraw Wewnętrznych i Administracji z 6 marca 2013 r. w sprawie zniesienia niektórych oddziałów Straży Granicznej oraz zmiany rozporządzenia w sprawie utworzenia oddziałów Straży Granicznej (Dz.U. 2013 r., poz. 342) obowiązuje od 16 października 2013 r.

[355] Zasięg terytorialny działania Nadodrzańskiego Oddziału Straży Granicznej zgodnie rozporządzeniem wymienionym w przypisie 22, obowiązuje od 16 listopada 2013 r. Jak wynika z § 6 wskazanego rozporządzenia, od 16 października 2013 r. do 15 listopada 2013 r., Nadodrzański Oddział obejmował województwa : lubuskie i wielkopolskie oraz wchodzące w skład województwa dolnośląskiego powiaty bolesławski i zgorzelecki.

[356] Wskazany zasięg terytorialny działania Śląsko-Małopolskiego Oddziału Straży Granicznej zgodnie z rozporządzeniem wymienionym w przypisie 22 będzie obowiązywał od 1 stycznia 2014 r

the Regulation on the establishment of Border Guard units, two Border Guard units were abolished: the Sudecki Border Guard Unit, based in Kłodzko (as of November 16, 2013), and the Karpacki Border Guard Unit, based in Nowy Sącz (as of January 1, 2014). The abolition of the aforementioned units is a consequence of the ongoing reorganization of this formation, which stems from the need to adapt the Border Guard to perform state tasks related to border traffic control, protection of the EU's external border, and prevention and counteracting illegal migration. The literature on the subject has presented proposals for introducing changes in the functioning of organizational units of the Border Guard performing tasks at internal borders. For example, A. Maksimczuk's proposal assumed that in order to improve and reduce the costs of protecting public order in border areas and within the country, following the example of the German border protection system, Border Guard units should be incorporated into the structures of the Provincial Police Headquarters[357]. This proposal was worth considering. It seems that the benefits were the primary reason for its implementation. The solution adopted in the multi-year operational concept of the Border Guard for 2009–2015 is also worth emphasizing.[358].

It should be remembered that after Poland joined the Schengen Area on December 21, 2007, controls at land and sea borders were abolished. In March 2008, the area was also expanded to include Polish airports. This means free travel without permanent passport checks with most European Union countries. Therefore, in the process of adapting the Border Guard infrastructure on Polish territory to the tasks of the formation after Poland's accession to the Schengen Area, the possibility of joint use of infrastructure with other law enforcement agencies, including the Police and Customs Service, has been envisaged. The planned direction of the transformation should be assessed positively. It will undoubtedly allow for more effective cooperation between these agencies in the fight against broadly defined border crime. The organizational structure of the Border Guard also includes guarded centers for foreigners, which are organizational units of five Border Guard Unit Headquarters and one Border Guard Outpost. These centers were established by the Minister of Interior and Administration pursuant to Article 109, paragraph 3 of the Act on Border Guards. 2 of the Act on Foreigners of June 13, 2003. 29 These centers are:

[357] A. Maksimczuk, *Granice państwowe, relacje z sąsiedztwem gospodarczym i wschodnie pogranicze Polski w dobie transformacji, integracji i globalizacji*, T. I, Białystok 2013, s. 281.
[358] Założenia wieloletniej koncepcji Straży Granicznej na lata 2009 – 2015, http: //www. strazgraniczna.pl/.

• The Guarded Center for Foreigners in Białystok, an organizational unit of the Podlaskie Border Guard Headquarters;

• The Guarded Center for Foreigners in Kętrzyn, an organizational unit of the Warmian-Masurian Border Guard Headquarters;

• The Guarded Center for Foreigners in Przemyśl, an organizational unit of the Bieszczady Border Guard Headquarters;

• The Guarded Center for Foreigners in Biała Podlaska, an organizational unit of the Border Guard Post in Biała Podlaska; and the Guarded Center for Foreigners in Lesznowola, an organizational unit of the Nadwiślański Border Guard Headquarters; • The Guarded Center for Foreigners in Krosno Odrzańskie, an organizational unit of the Nadodrzański Border Guard Unit.

The Border Guard also currently operates three training centers dedicated to training and preparing Border Guard employees and officers to properly perform their assigned duties. These include:

• The Central Border Guard Training Center named after Marshal Józef Piłsudski of Poland in Koszalin[359];

• Border Guard Training Center named after Soldiers of the Border Protection Corps in Kętrzyn [360].

• Border Guard Specialist Training Center in Lubań [361].

The creation and dissolution of training centers, defining their organization and scope of activities, as well as supervising these units, are entrusted to the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard (see Art. 6, sec. 4, Art. 3a, item 5 of the Act). The basic tasks of the Border Guard

[359] Ośrodek ten utworzony został zarządzeniem nr 28 Komendanta Głównego Straży Granicznej z 18 września 2001 r. w sprawie utworzenia, organizacji i zakresu działania Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej im. Marszałka Polski Józefa Piłsudskiego (Dz.Urz. KGSG 2001.6.20 ze zm.).
[360] Ośrodek ten utworzony został zarządzeniem nr 13 Komendanta Głównego Straży Granicznej z 27 lutego 2012 r. w sprawie utworzenia, organizacji i zakresu działania Centrum Szkolenia Straży Granicznej im. Żołnierzy Korpusu Ochrony Pogranicza (Dz. Urz. KGSG 2012.11 ze zm.).
[361] Ośrodek ten utworzony został zarządzeniem nr 68 Komendanta Głównego Straży Granicznej z 30 września 2009 r. w sprawie utworzenia, organizacji i zakresu działania Ośrodka Szkoleń Specjalistycznych Straży Granicznej w Lubaniu (Dz. Urz. KGSG 2009.11.68 ze zm.). 39http://www.sm.strazgraniczna.pl.

are specified in the Act (Art. 1, sec. 2). The tasks entrusted to this organization, which should be mentioned first and foremost, are: protecting the state border and organizing and carrying out border traffic control. The protection of the state border consists of preventing illegal crossing by persons and means of transport, as well as the movement of goods. This task is carried out through so-called border operations undertaken on sections of the border between border crossings, at border crossings, and in the border zone. These operations include, among others: patrols, surveillance, including the use of technical means, pursuits, ambushes, and the inspection of persons and means of transport on access roads to the border[362]. Crossing the state border takes place through designated and open border crossings. As part of organizing and implementing border traffic control, activities are carried out to determine the legality of crossing the state border by persons, means of transport, and goods, and to prevent illegal crossings. It is important to note that the Border Guard is obligated to cooperate with the relevant European Union bodies and institutions, as well as border protection authorities of other countries, in protecting the state border and controlling border traffic.

It is worth noting that Article 470 of the draft Act on Foreigners, amending, among others, Article 1 of the Act, also lists the prevention and counteracting of illegal migration among the new tasks of the Border Guard. This task is to be carried out primarily by monitoring compliance with regulations regarding the entry and stay of foreigners into the territory of the Republic of Poland, identifying and analyzing migration threats, and combating migration threats, including crime related to illegal migration. This decision should be assessed positively. So far, although this institution is among the entities responsible for counteracting illegal migration, there is no relevant provision in the law. The Border Guard is currently the leading immigration service. By controlling the border traffic of people, goods, and means of transport, this formation is the primary institution combating illegal migration[363]. The Border Guard's other tasks specified in the Act include:

1) issuing permits to cross the state border, including visas;

2) identifying, preventing, and detecting crimes and offenses, and prosecuting their perpetrators, within the Border Guard's jurisdiction, in particular:

[362] http://www.sm.strazgraniczna.pl
[363] T. Franczyk, *Nielegalna migracja i przemyt ludzi*, Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej 2006, nr 3.

• crimes and offenses concerning compliance with regulations regarding crossing the state border, its marking, and the credibility of documents authorizing crossing the state border;

• fiscal offenses and fiscal offenses listed in Article 134 § 1 item 1 of the Fiscal Penal Code;

• crimes and offenses related to crossing the state border or the movement across the state border of goods and excise goods subject to mandatory marking with excise stamps, as well as items specified in the regulations on weapons and ammunition, on explosives, on the protection of cultural property, on national archive resources, on counteracting drug addiction, and on population records and identity cards;

• crimes and offenses specified in the "Act of 13 June 2003 on Foreigners" (Journal of Laws of 2006, No. 234, item 1694, as amended) and the "Act of 13 June 2003 on Granting Protection to Foreigners within the Territory of the Republic of Poland" (Journal of Laws of 2009, No. 189, item 1472, 2010, No. 81, item 531, and 2011, No. 73, item 390)41;

• crimes against public safety and crimes against communication safety, in connection with the operation of air transport;

• crimes specified in Articles 228, 229, and 231 of the Penal Code, committed by Border Guard employees in connection with the performance of their official duties;

• crimes specified in Article 229 of the Penal Code, committed by persons other than Border Guard officers or employees in connection with the performance of official duties by Border Guard officers or employees;

• crimes specified in Articles 190, 222, 223, and 226 of the Penal Code, directed against Border Guard officers during or in connection with the performance of their official duties[364];
• offenses specified in Article 264a of the Penal Code and Articles 9 and 10 of the Act of June 15, 2012, on the effects of entrusting work to foreigners staying illegally on the territory of the Republic of Poland (Journal of Laws, item 769).

A significant task assigned to this formation is to ensure the security of international communication and public order within the territorial scope of the border crossing, and within the scope of the Border Guard's jurisdiction, also in the border zone. This is equivalent to the

[364] http://www.sm.strazgraniczna.pl.

Border Guard's authority to inspect persons and vehicles. The nature of its security-related tasks also entails obligations to protect the state against the uncontrolled import of harmful materials and substances, as well as combating the smuggling of hazardous materials. The Border Guard is obligated to prevent the transport of waste, harmful chemicals, nuclear and radioactive materials across the state border, as well as the contamination of border waters[365]. The Border Guard's duties also include:

1) conducting security checks on international means of transport, within the territorial scope of road, rail, sea, and river border crossings, and at airports, in accordance with the principles set forth in the regulations on civil aviation security;

2) ensuring safety on board aircraft carrying passengers;

3) protecting communication routes of particular international significance from crime, the combating of which falls within the competence of the Border Guard;

4) conducting activities to identify and counteract terrorist threats;

5) installing and maintaining border markers on land and preparing, updating, and storing border geodetic and cartographic documentation;

6) protecting the integrity of markers and devices used to protect the state border;

7) collecting and processing information on state border protection and border traffic control and making it available to the relevant state authorities;

8) supervising the operation of Polish maritime areas and compliance by vessels with the regulations in force in these areas;

9) protecting the state border in the airspace of the Republic of Poland by observing aircraft and flying objects crossing the state border at low altitudes and reporting such flights to the appropriate units of the Polish Air Force;

[365] http://www.sm.strazgraniczna.pl.

10) preventing the movement of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, weapons, ammunition, and explosives across the state border without the permission required under separate regulations;

11) conducting inspections of the legality of foreigners working, conducting business activities by foreigners, and entrusting work to foreigners.

Among the state bodies and institutions safeguarding national security, the Border Guard plays a special role. As a formation whose primary mission is to protect the state border and the European Union, it must directly counteract various negative phenomena. These include, first and foremost, illegal migration driven by economic factors and smuggling crimes primarily related to the smuggling of vehicles and goods without excise duty. The list of tasks entrusted to the Border Guard is very wide and varied[366]. This requires professional and comprehensive training of its officers, which in practice enables them to properly perform their duties. Only an effective fight against the threats posed by these phenomena, among others, will protect national security at many levels. The Border Guard has been systematically transformed since 2000. The need for changes (including in infrastructure) was dictated by Poland's accession to the European Union and subsequently to the Schengen Agreement[367].

It should be emphasized that the Border Guard and the Territorial Defence Forces (WOT) should develop cooperation in threat intelligence even in peacetime. The Border Guard is obligated to cooperate with other bodies and services in identifying and countering terrorist threats. Following a risk analysis, it would be advisable to prepare plans, procedures, and instructions that would clearly define the Border Guard's procedures in the event of martial law being declared or the outbreak of war. It is natural to perceive the key role of uniformed services in the state as an element of the security system. However, during wartime, the Armed Forces play a key role in the state's security system. Depending on the type and scale of the threat, other uniformed services play a leading role in countering the effects of crisis situations in peacetime. The coronavirus threat has confirmed the principle that specific types of threats

[366] Zadania, do których wykonywania została powołana Straż Graniczna, określono nie tylko w ustawie o Straży Granicznej, ale i znajdziemy je także w innych ustawach. Obowiązek ich wykonywania wynika wprost z art. 1 ust. 2 pkt 14 ustawy.

[367] Przystąpienie naszego kraju do Strefy Schengen wiązało się z całkowitym otwarciem granic, czyli zaniechano kontroli granicznej osób w przejściach granicznych mieszczących się na odcinkach granicy państwowej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Republiką Federalną Niemiec, Republiką Czeską, Republiką Słowacką i Republiką Litewską, będących wewnętrzną granicą Unii Europejskiej. Polska stała się jednak w większym stopniu odpowiedzialna za ochronę odcinków granicy państwowej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z Federacją Rosyjską, Republiką Białorusi i Ukrainą, stanowiących granicę zewnętrzną Unii Europejskiej.

lead to various forms of cooperation between uniformed services and the military. This approach was noticeable in shaping the relationship between the Border Guard and the Armed Forces in recent months of the pandemic. A good example of such cooperation was the collaboration between the Polish Armed Forces and the Border Guard, the legal framework of which was defined by Decision No. 39/MON of the Minister of National Defense of March 14, 2020, on the use of units and subunits of the Polish Armed Forces to assist Border Guard units. Based on this decision, the Minister of National Defense ordered the deployment of subunits of the Polish Armed Forces to assist the Border Guard, to protect the border, including open and closed border crossings. It is important to note that Decision No. 39/MON proved to be a sound decision. The military's participation in border protection fulfilled its purpose and relieved the Border Guard of its ongoing duties, which was particularly evident with the publication of the Regulation of the Minister of Health of March 20, 2020, on declaring a state of epidemic in the territory of the Republic of Poland. The regulation imposed on the Border Guard a number of tasks relating to the restriction of certain modes of movement through the territory of the Republic of Poland, including the introduction of the obligation to undergo quarantine for persons arriving in the territory of the Republic of Poland from abroad.

A key solution in the event of a threat to public security within the territorial range of a border crossing and in the border zone, if the Border Guard lacks the ability to effectively counteract the threat or crime, or if the nature of the threat justifies it, is the possibility of deploying units and subunits of the Armed Forces in a form of independent countermeasures. The deployment of units and subunits of the Armed Forces is based on a decision of the President of the Republic of Poland issued at the request of the Prime Minister. In urgent cases, the decision to deploy units and subunits of the Armed Forces is made by the Minister of National Defense at the request of the Minister of Internal Affairs, specifying the type of threat and the form of independent countermeasures, and immediately notifying the President of the Republic of Poland and the Prime Minister. The President of the Republic of Poland immediately issues a decision approving or repealing the decision. It should also be added that in the event of a threat to public safety or order within the territorial scope of a border crossing and in the border zone, if the Border Guard's forces are insufficient or may prove insufficient to perform their tasks of protecting public safety and order, or if the level of threat so justifies, the Prime Minister, at the request of the Minister of Internal Affairs in consultation with the Minister of National Defense, may order the deployment of Military Gendarmerie soldiers to assist the Border Guard. In the event of mobilization and during wartime, the Border Guard

may be militarized. Officers in a service relationship on the date of mobilization or on the date of the beginning of wartime, as determined by the President of the Republic of Poland, become, by operation of law, officers serving in wartime and remain in this service until dismissed. According to the current Constitution of the Republic of Poland, in the event of an external threat to the state, an armed attack on the territory of the Republic of Poland, or when an international agreement stipulates a commitment to joint defense against aggression, the President of the Republic of Poland, at the request of the Council of Ministers, may introduce martial law on part or all of the state's territory. This provision, while not open to interpretational doubts, has a complex practical dimension in the context of border protection, including specific border crossings. The same Constitution stipulates that the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland serve to protect the state's independence and the integrity of its territory, and to ensure the security and inviolability of its borders. This specific constitutional obligation imposed on the Armed Forces does not prescribe either the method or form of defense of the state's territory, including, for example, the need to conduct permanent defense or maneuver defense, including the need to effect a necessary retreat. In other words, defending a specific border crossing in the face of military aggression will not, by its very nature, be a significant issue from the perspective of a defensive operation. This issue, however, has a completely different dimension for Border Guard units serving at the border and border posts, as its officers cannot suspend their duty to protect the border during peacetime, especially in the era of emerging hybrid threats, which may manifest themselves as an inspired attempt to cross the border by illegal immigrants or a provocation, now difficult to imagine, designed to tarnish the image of the Polish state. The question therefore arises as to how, how, and where Border Guard units and their individual officers should withdraw in the face of a military threat, so as not to become victims of physical liquidation or capture.

In my opinion, a solution should be considered whereby, upon the declaration of martial law or in the face of the likelihood of a military conflict breaking out (regardless of whether it is a hybrid conflict, a low-intensity conflict below the threshold of war, or a full-scale aggression), Border Guard units within a given voivodeship would be automatically subordinated to the Provincial Territorial Defense Brigades. In the case of Border Guard units covering more than one voivodeship, Border Guard outposts located within a given voivodeship would be subordinated to the Territorial Defense Brigades. This solution should also apply to the Maritime Border Guard Unit, including its naval assets, so that appropriate procedures for cooperation in peacetime can be developed. In the proposed concept, Border Guard units,

under the Territorial Defense Forces' subordination, would shift to irregular operations, such as conducting local intelligence and reconnaissance or information operations. This method of Border Guard operation on the ground stems from the fact that there will be neither the time nor the logistical capacity to withdraw Border Guard resources deep into the country. It seems reasonable that the Border Guard's reconnaissance drones, once an attacker has crossed the border, should be used by local territorial defense units, in accordance with applicable procedures. This solution can be verified by organizing various joint exercises and simultaneous games in this area involving the Border Guard and Territorial Defense Forces. In the future, the Border Guard should be equipped with such drones and the necessary equipment.

6.6. The Role and Tasks of Secret Services in the State Security System

Polish secret services, such as the Internal Security Agency (ABW), Central Anti-Corruption Bureau (CBA), Military Counterintelligence Service (SWW), Military Counterintelligence Service (SKW), and the Foreign Intelligence Agency (AW), have institutional and legal foundations and are tasked with ensuring the internal and external security of the state and society. Based on legal acts, the functions and tasks of the Polish secret services have been defined, which primarily concern protecting the state from internal and external threats. Each state, through its own agencies, shapes social coexistence. It establishes relations between the government and society and establishes appropriate bodies and institutions, including security and law and order authorities. The state can also be understood as an institution whose effective authority ensures efficient functioning, but in terms of security requires special institutions and bodies[368].

An important aspect of the analysis is identifying the current challenges to the security of states and societies. Security authorities and institutions must adapt their tasks to the changing conditions in the security environment. Contemporary threat sources are becoming increasingly diverse[369], The efforts of foreign intelligence agencies are becoming increasingly visible in the political arena, particularly during elections to the national parliament, the European Parliament, the presidency, and local governments. Information on the level of public support for political parties, as well as knowledge of the candidates' characteristic traits

[368] A. Chodubski, *Jednostka, naród, państwo, [w:] Wprowadzenie do nauki o państwie i polityce*, pod red. B. Szmulika, M. Żmigrodzkiego, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2002, s. 164.
[369] A. Żebrowski, M. Żmigrodzki, J. Babula, *Rola służb specjalnych*, red. nauk. A. Żebrowski, „Abrys", Kraków 1999, s. 9.

(strengths and weaknesses that allow for the development of their psychological profile), can prove valuable, for example, during political and economic negotiations. Using such information during international meetings can influence decision-making and benefit a specific party. Foreign intelligence agencies are actively engaged in activities against Poland. Intelligence operations are conducted not only in the economic and military spheres but also target the political situation in the country.

The areas of interest of foreign intelligence agencies include, among others, the reorganization of military forces, the development of technologies, and the purchase of new weapons for the military. Access to military and technological secrets, paid for with significant effort and financial investment, helps foreign intelligence agencies achieve their strategic goals. These services have always been interested in military processes, armed forces reform plans, and the enemy's defense industry. Today, the tasks facing security services are much more diverse and multifaceted than those faced by counterintelligence during the Cold War. Given contemporary threats, these services should "see" and "hear" more than they did 20 years ago. Most of the Polish security apparatus and strategically important companies related to sectors such as banking, energy, and government agencies have been and continue to be penetrated by, among others, Russian intelligence services. The country's economic potential, the characteristics of the domestic market, relations with other countries—including economic agreements, technological services, and issues related to the development of armed forces, modern weapons, and technology—are areas of interest to foreign intelligence services. In summary, state secrets related to defense, foreign policy, economics, and other security elements are prime targets for foreign intelligence services.

It is worth recalling a brief historical outline of the evolution of intelligence services. In May 1990, the Office of State Protection (UOP) was established. It was an institution with many responsibilities. According to the act, the UOP's responsibilities included identifying and countering all threats that might be directed against the state. The UOP was to work to ensure the security, defense, independence, international standing, and sovereignty of the Polish state. The legislature emphasized that the task of this institution's employees was to combat espionage and international terrorism. The economic aspect of state security and the prevention of economic crimes, which could constitute a source of danger, were also important. One of the other areas of operation of the aforementioned institution was to prepare various

analyses and information for the highest state offices, facilitating the decision-making of high-ranking officials in the state to ensure the most favorable conditions for the Polish state.

Secret services are a body primarily responsible for internal security. The institutional system of internal security consists of bodies and offices for which security-related tasks constitute one of many roles within the state, as well as specialized institutions and bodies for which internal security is the primary responsibility[370]. Secret services mainly perform a protective function by ensuring public safety and order, protecting property and people's health, property[371]. The emergence of a new social order in Poland initiated the emergence of a new normative order based on values and interests that are the target of action[372]. In the political and social doctrine, state bodies, beyond their protective and regulatory functions, also play a significant innovative and adaptive role, as well as an educational and economic one. By diligently performing their duties, they contribute to the nation's image, strengthen national bonds, and educate society by fostering attitudes of honesty, awareness, and a culture of coexistence[373]. It must be taken into account that criminals can influence the economic, military or political decisions of a given country through various actions[374].

In addition, secret services participate in economic warfare, performing offensive and defensive tasks. They obtain and submit to authorized entities information that may be of significant importance to the security and international standing of the state. Furthermore, they conduct activities aimed at identifying and preventing crimes that undermine the economic foundations of the state. A specific law and order in the state is created by the ruling elites[375], who should embody honesty, healthy patriotism, competence and reliability in performing their functions[376]. Secret services, as structures organized by the state, are also aimed at secretly

[370] G. Rydlewski, *Kształt systemu instytucjonalnego bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego w Polsce*, [w:] Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne państwa. Wybrane zagadnienia, pod red. S. Sulowskiego, M. Brzezińskiego, Dom Wydawniczy Elipsa, Warszawa 2009, s. 134

[371] W. Kitler, *System bezpieczeństwa obronności Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, [w:] Policja w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa*. Materiały z konferencji, Legionowo 15–16 V 2003, Wydawnictwo Centrum Szkolenia Policji, Warszawa 2003, s. 23–24.

[372] M. Ziółkowski, *Pragmatyzacja świadomości społeczeństwa polskiego*, „Kultura i Społeczeństwo" 1994, nr 4, s. 23.

[373] A. Chodubski, Jednostka, naród, państwo..., dz. cyt., s. 165.

[374] A. Żebrowski, Ewolucja polskich służb specjalnych. Wybrane obszary walki informacyjnej, Oficyna Wydawnicza Abrys, Kraków 2005, s. 255.

[375] N. A. Abueva twierdzi, że albo akcentuje się „lepszych", albo „wybranych" – N. A. Abueva, Stanovlenie vlastvuuščej èlite *Respubliki Kazachstan: problemy i perspekivy*, Almaty 2002, s. 16.

[376] Por. M. Stefaniuk, *Teoria elit Vilfreda Pareto*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, Lublin 2001.

obtaining information that is important from the point of view of state security, or preventing it from being obtained by similar structures identified as foreign[377].

6.6.1. Internal Security Agency and Intelligence Agency

The Internal Security Agency, established by the Act of 24 May 2002 on the Internal Security Agency and the Intelligence Agency, primarily serves as a protective agency against internal threats. Its creators recognized that the Internal Security Agency's responsibilities include taking steps to protect the state from internal threats and actions that could undermine its sovereignty, defense, and territorial integrity. Internal security encompasses counterintelligence activities aimed at identifying threats from foreign intelligence services, activities ensuring economic security, protection against terrorist activities, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Thanks to its extensive scope of responsibilities, the Internal Security Agency is the largest institution ensuring Poland's security. The legislator has assigned it the sole responsibility of upholding the constitutional order of the Republic of Poland[378]. An important area of ABW's activities in protecting against internal threats is preventive training for public officials on the dangers that may arise in the performance of their duties. These tasks pertain to the highest positions of power in the country, which are responsible for protecting the state's interests. The ABW's primary responsibilities include ensuring internal security. In its operations, ABW performs analytical and informational, investigative, protective and control, and operational and reconnaissance functions. Secret services in Poland are positioned at the strategic level of state governance, which constitutes the most important source of information in the process of shaping security[379].

The Internal Security Agency and the Foreign Intelligence Agency are secret services established to ensure internal security and constitutional order. The Internal Security Agency and the Internal Security Agency are headed by chiefs, who are central government administration bodies and report directly to the Prime Minister (Article 3 of the Internal Security Agency Act). The Head of the Internal Security Agency and the Head of the Internal Security Agency operate with the assistance of their subordinate services, which are government

[377] S. Zalewski, *Służby specjalne w państwie demokratycznym*, cyt. za: S. Zalewski, s. 15.
[378] Ł. Skoneczny, *Rola Agencji Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego w systemie bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, „Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego" 2009, nr 1, s. 24.
[379] A. Żebrowski, *Kontrola cywilna nad służbami specjalnymi III Rzeczypospolitej (1989–1999)*. Zagadnienia politologiczno-prawne, „Abrys", Kraków 2001, s. 84.

administration offices[380]. The act describes in detail the duties of ABW officers. These include combating espionage, terrorism, and protecting state secrets. Similarly, the act on the Office of State Protection (UOP) devotes considerable attention to economic security.

ABW employees are to protect the state's economic security, identify and prevent activities that would undermine the economic foundations of the state, combat corruption and the illegal production and trade of weapons. ABW's tasks also include combating crime (illegal production and trade in goods, technologies, or services of strategic importance to the Polish state). A key area in which ABW operated was providing representatives of the Polish state with important information on its security and various analyses[381]. The Foreign Intelligence Agency (AW) fulfills a different set of tasks. Its goal is to obtain, analyze, and communicate to the authorities all information concerning the security of the Polish state and its international situation. AW officers focus their efforts on identifying and countering threats that may threaten Poland from outside, for example, from foreign international entities. In this context, it is worth mentioning the identification of terrorism, extremism, and organized crime of an international nature, as well as the international trade in arms and other goods, raw materials, and services of importance to the state in the modern world.

The AW also has electronic intelligence. It is worth emphasizing that while AW operations are to be conducted outside Poland, this does not mean that the AW cannot operate within the borders of the Polish state; this depends, however, on whether a given matter is related to foreign activity. It is worth noting, however, that all operational and reconnaissance activities can only be undertaken through the ABW. The Act also regulates the procedure for appointing and dismissing the heads of the ABW and AW. The Prime Minister decides on this, after consulting the President, the Board, and the Parliamentary Committee for Special Services. The internal structure of the Polish secret services appears to be an important issue. The AW consists of the Chief's Office, the Office of the Security Plenipotentiary, the Office of Personnel and Training, the Office of Information and Analysis, and the Financial Office. In addition to the structures mentioned above, the ABW includes Bureau "A," Bureau "B," Bureau "C," Bureau "D," and Bureau "E," as well as the Intelligence Agency Training Center. The Prime Minister's decree also established the internal structure of the ABW. It comprises the following Departments: Counterintelligence, Counteracting Corruption, Terrorism,

[380] £. Bełza, *Pozycja szefów służb w sferze bezpieczeństwa pozamilitarnego,* Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe 2011, Nr 4, s. 105 i n.
[381] Ustawa z 24 maja 2002 r. o Agencji Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego oraz Agencji Wywiadu, art. 5.

and Organized Crime, Criminal Proceedings, Technical Security, Classified Information Protection, and Teleinformatics Security. In addition to the departments, the ABW also includes the Records and Archives Office, the Legal Office, the Finance Office, the Human Resources Office, the Administration and Economic Office, and the Chief of Staff. Other bodies include the Inspectorate of Supervision, Control, and Internal Security, the Internal Audit Team, the Life Protection Team, and the ABW Central Training Center. Branch Offices are located in the most important Polish cities, totaling 15 in Białystok, Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk, Katowice, Kraków, Lublin, Łódź, and Olsztyn. Opole, Poznań, Radom, Rzeszów, Szczecin, Wrocław and Zielona Góra.

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6.6.2. Central Anticorruption Bureau

Currently, protecting state security is the responsibility of a number of services that constitute the institutional state security system. Elements of this system include the armed forces, police forces, and secret services[382]. This type of service includes the Central

[382] K. Walczuk, M. Bożek, *Konstytucyjne i ustawowe uwarunkowania organizacji i funkcjonowania Agencji*

Anticorruption Bureau (CBA), a specialized secret service established to combat corruption in public and economic life, as well as activities detrimental to the state's economic interests. Its operation combines the powers of a secret service (operational and reconnaissance activities) with those of a law enforcement agency (investigative), enabling the comprehensive detection and neutralization of corruption-related crimes at the highest levels of government. The CBA operates under the Act of June 9, 2006, on the Central Anticorruption Bureau. The CBA's responsibilities include identifying, preventing, and detecting crimes specified in Article 2, Section 1, Item 1 of the Act on the Central Anticorruption Bureau. Its primary responsibility is to prosecute perpetrators of crimes against the activities of state and local government institutions (Articles 228-231 of the Penal Code and Article 14 of the Act of August 21, 1997, on Restrictions on Business Activities by Persons Performing Public Functions). The Bureau carries out its tasks based on three main pillars:

• investigative activities – detecting and prosecuting corruption, bribery, and financial abuse committed by officials and entrepreneurs;

• audit activities – monitoring the proper implementation of privatization procedures, public procurement, and economic decisions made by state authorities;

• analytical and preventive activities – analyzing asset declarations of persons holding public offices and conducting anti-corruption education.

It is important to note that if a crime has elements of corruption, the CBA is responsible for prosecuting such crimes[383]. The fight against corruption is a very important task because it contributes to preventing this type of crimes at the highest levels of power in the political, social and economic spheres[384].

The Central Anticorruption Bureau Act defines corruption as an act:

Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego, Siedlce 2015, s. 13ñ14. W. Kotowicz, Służby specjalne w Polsce, (w:) A. Żukowski, M. Hartliński, W.T. Modzelewski, J. Więcławski (red.), *Podstawowe kategorie bezpieczeństwa narodowego*, Olsztyn 2015, s. 311.

[383] D. Lebowa, Formacje umundurowane podległe Prezesowi Rady Ministrów oraz Ministrowi Spraw Wewnętrznych, (w:) M. Zdyb, J. Stelmasiak, K. Sikora (red.), System bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego. Organy i inne podmioty administracji, Warszawa 2015, s. 74.

[384] M. Karpiuk, Zakres działania służb specjalnych, (w:) M. Bożek, M. Czuryk, M. Karpiuk, J. Kostrubiec, Służby specjalne w strukturze władz publicznych. Zagadnienia prawno-ustrojowe, Warszawa 2014, s. 77.

• involving the promising, offering, or giving by any person, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage to a person performing a public function, for themselves or for any other person, in exchange for an action or omission in the performance of their duties;

• involving the request or acceptance by a person performing a public function, directly or indirectly, of any undue advantage, for themselves or for any other person, or the acceptance of an offer or promise of such advantage, in exchange for an action or omission in the performance of their duties, committed in the course of business activities involving the fulfillment of obligations towards a public authority (institution); • involving the promising, offering, or giving, directly or indirectly, to a person managing an entity not included in the public finance sector, or working in any capacity for such an entity, any undue advantage, for themselves or for any other person, in exchange for an action or omission that violates their obligations and constitutes a socially harmful reciprocity, or committed in the course of business activities involving the fulfillment of obligations towards a public authority (institution); • involving the requesting or accepting, directly or indirectly, by a person managing an entity not included in the public finance sector, or working in any capacity for such an entity, any undue advantage, or accepting an offer or promise of such advantage, for themselves or for any other person, in exchange for an action or omission that violates their obligations and constitutes a socially harmful reciprocity.

Table 3. CBA compared to other security components

Attribute / Service	Central Anti-Corruption Bureau	Internal Security Agency (ABW)	Central Bureau of Investigation of the Police (CBŚP)
Main profile	Corruption, official and economic crime to the detriment of the state.	Counterintelligence, terrorism, protection of classified information.	Organized criminal, drug and economic crime.
Main tools	Operational, investigative, unique control of asset declarations and decisions.	Operational, investigative, counterintelligence.	Organized criminal activity, Operational, investigative.
Supervision	Prime Minister / Minister Coordinator of Special Services.	Prime Minister.	Chief Commander of the Police / Ministry of Interior and Administration.

It's worth mentioning that regarding the current legal status of the Central Anticorruption Bureau in 2026, after a heated political debate in parliament, the Sejm passed a bill to liquidate the CBA (which was supposed to take place in the fall) and distribute its responsibilities among the Police, the Internal Security Agency, and the National Revenue

Service. However, this bill was officially vetoed by the President of the Republic of Poland, meaning the CBA continues to operate as an independent secret service. Simultaneously, the Bureau's structure is undergoing profound personnel and organizational changes aimed at depoliticizing it and strengthening its investigative capabilities. Key operational and command divisions (e.g., the Operational and Investigative Department) are currently staffed by experienced officers transferred from the Central Bureau of Police Investigation (CBŚP).

6.6.3. . Military Counterintelligence Service and Military Intelligence Service

The beginning of the 21st century brought many significant changes, including the globalization of every aspect of human life. This process also affected intelligence and counterintelligence services. Counterintelligence is engaged in observing and combating foreign agents by conducting offensive and defensive operations directed against opposing intelligence services in order to gain an advantage over them. International intelligence cooperation is crucial for neutralizing the activities of foreign services, as well as for combating terrorist organizations and organized crime. It is worth noting that the current state of the secret services in Poland stems from a complicated history in the second half of the 20th century, largely related to dependence on Soviet intelligence services, as well as controversial events and ill-considered decisions from the period of political transformation. During the political transition and the establishment of democracy, foreign services significantly expanded their capabilities to conduct reconnaissance of armed forces as part of military technical cooperation and the work of military inspections. The struggle to obtain credible information regarding political, economic, and military matters continues unabated. Poland is a key target for Russian intelligence, as its eastern border is also the external border of NATO and the European Union. Polish political circles have become involved in the Ukrainian conflict in recent years and are actively promoting energy diversification in Europe, which is contrary to Russia's interests[385].

Until 2006, the Military Information Services (WSI) operated in Poland, carrying out both intelligence and military counterintelligence functions. However, due to controversy, accusations of abuse, and unclear personnel connections, the agency was disbanded. Two separate institutions were established in its place: the Military Intelligence Service (SWW), responsible for operations abroad, and the Military Counterintelligence Service

[385] Poland Needs New Counterintelligence Service (2014), „Polish News Bulletin. Weekend Supplement", 1 kwietnia.

(SKW), responsible for internal security and army security. This division was intended to increase operational transparency, enhance efficiency, and reduce the risk of abuse.

The Military Intelligence Service is responsible for obtaining information outside Poland that may be relevant to national defense and security. Its main tasks include:

• collecting and analyzing information on potential military threats;

• monitoring the activities of foreign armies and the arms industry;

• observing armed conflicts that may indirectly affect Poland's interests;

• monitoring armed conflicts that may indirectly affect Poland's interests;

• supporting Polish military missions abroad through reconnaissance and analysis of security situations.

According to the classic definition, intelligence focuses on discreetly uncovering secrets, and particularly on obtaining information[386].

Intelligence activities often rely on operations that straddle the legal boundaries, or even sometimes exceed them. Is breaking the law inherent in the nature of intelligence? Paradoxically, counterintelligence combats all organizations that break the law by conducting activities aimed against the state's interests. Another specific feature of intelligence, unlike counterintelligence, is its operation beyond state borders. However, currently, the above thesis does not fully capture the specificity of intelligence work. Geographical and political boundaries are becoming increasingly blurred, especially when services operate in cyberspace. In essence, the concept of intelligence can be defined as actions undertaken to acquire information and use it to gain an advantage over an adversary. Currently, a full definition of intelligence should also include the acquisition of knowledge about information processes, systems, and networks used by a rival[387]. Aggressive enemy activity forces the services to take defensive actions aimed at securing information. Within the services, such actions may be conducted by counterintelligence. The use of the prefix "kontr-" literally means the opposite

[386] Kipp J. W. (2015), *FMSO-JRIC and Open Source Intelligence: Speaking Prose in a World of Verse*, „Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin", nr 31/4.
[387] Górka M. (2016), *Otwarte źródła informacji – nowa czy klasyczna formuła wywiadu*?, w: Służby wywiadowcze jako element polskiej polityki bezpieczeństwa, red. M. Górka, Toruń.

or opposition to what the second part of the word expresses (Skorupka, Auderska, Łempicka, 1969, p. 298). Therefore, semantically, counterintelligence, as previously suggested, is the opposite of the word intelligence. According to the definition in the Historical Dictionaries of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, counterintelligence is the analytical and operational activities aimed at identifying and neutralizing foreign intelligence operations against one's own state. Counterintelligence has three main tasks:

• ensuring the physical security of information;

• identifying and apprehending one's own citizens who spy for a foreign government;

• identifying foreign agents working against the state's interests and attempting to turn them into double agents or prosecute them for espionage[388].

Another definition of counterintelligence focuses on protecting one's own service from the penetration of foreign intelligence into its structures. A third definition of counterintelligence emphasizes—in addition to the previously mentioned tasks—the role of disinformation, penetration, and thwarting any actions of the opposing side that are perceived as a threat to the state[389]. According to the above definitions, counterintelligence can be defined as activities conducted to protect against intelligence activities, sabotage, or attacks carried out on behalf of or for foreign powers, organizations, individuals, or international terrorist operations. Counterintelligence activities are conducted to identify hostile entities and collect evidence of criminal activity, so that appropriate criminal or administrative measures can be applied. In most cases, they serve to neutralize threats. Counterintelligence also secures military or peacekeeping operations and provides commands with the information necessary to conduct them. Counterintelligence tasks also include collecting and analyzing data necessary to ensure the state's security[390]. Effective counterintelligence is essential to implementing state policy. The challenges facing Polish counterintelligence stem primarily from a difficult history, which

[388] Turner M. A. (2006), *Historical Dictionary of United States Intelligence*, w: Historical Dictionaries of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, t. 2, red. J. Woronoff, Lanham, Maryland–Toronto–Oxford.
[389] Pringle R. W. (2006), *Historical Dictionary of Russian and Soviet Intelligence*, w: Historical Dictionaries of Intelligence and Counterintelligence, t. 5, red. J. Woronoff, Lanham, Maryland–Toronto–Oxford.
[390] Morris W. (2000), *Army counterintelligence and the impact of the Defense Counterin telligence Information System, „*Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin", nr 26/1.

sometimes complicates relations with neighbors. Furthermore, its geopolitical location often means that Poland plays the role of a buffer state[391].

Given the intensification of activities by foreign intelligence services, particularly Russian ones, and the potential threat of terrorism, the authorities cannot underestimate the importance of counterintelligence for broadly defined national security. Poland is currently the subject of attention from numerous intelligence agencies. Foreign intelligence services are primarily interested in information about Poland's political and socio-economic situation, as well as decisions made by the authorities aimed at strengthening the state, its territorial and economic integrity, and defending national interests in the international arena, including reactions to developments concerning EU common policy. It is therefore worth noting that foreign intelligence services are particularly interested in the reorganization of the armed forces resulting from Poland's membership in NATO, as well as in the development of defense industry infrastructure, advanced technologies, military armaments, transportation infrastructure, scientific research results, and energy resources. Competing with a foreign service with greater human resources and significantly better equipment poses a challenge for counterintelligence. Any secret service tasked with ensuring national security must ensure the confidentiality of the details of its work. Another responsibility of the services is to protect classified information from unauthorized access, which could harm the country's economic security or defense system. Counterintelligence protects collected information from intelligence activities of other countries, sabotage, or attacks carried out on behalf of foreign powers, organizations, or individuals. Counterintelligence also protects defense facilities located within the country, which may pose a potential threat during natural disasters and in the event of criminal and terrorist activities. During counterterrorism operations or military missions, military counterintelligence ensures the safety of soldiers and civilian personnel, helps maintain a high level of combat readiness and capability, and collaborates with other units (such as GROM, Formoza, Agat, NIL) to neutralize leaders and active members of terrorist groups. It also seeks to obtain information on enemy locations and possible ambushes along army routes. Military counterintelligence also undertakes activities aimed at combating organized crime, corruption, smuggling, drug and arms trafficking, and various negative phenomena within the army and navy. Another important task of counterintelligence services is the

[391] Piasecki B. (2015), Offensive Counterintelligence and the Challenges facing Polish Intelligence Services, https://www.stratfor.com/the-hub/offensive-counterin-telligence-and-challenges-facing-polish-intelligence services, 12.02.2016.

surveillance of individuals holding prominent positions or working in areas sensitive to national security. Such individuals often establish "unauthorized" contacts with foreign diplomats or employees of foreign intelligence services. This may indicate that such an individual has (or may have) dangerous ties to a foreign state, organization, or individual[392].

In summary, it is worth recalling that counterintelligence tasks ensuring state security include:

• countering operations carried out by foreign intelligence services;

• protecting information constituting state secrets and combating intelligence activities aimed at obtaining scientific, technical, and economic information;

• participating in operational activities to protect the state border in cooperation with other services;

• ensuring the security of missions on the territory of foreign countries, as well as the protection of compatriots residing abroad in cooperation with the services of the countries where such persons reside;

• conducting disinformation activities; minimizing or neutralizing errors made by other services (such as unauthorized "leaks" of classified information, exposing one's own intelligence sources);

• combating organized crime and economic crime; and cooperating with other law enforcement agencies and state bodies to eliminate cyber threats; • cooperation with the security services of other countries regarding the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, military-technical cooperation, and countering international terrorism.

The counterintelligence tasks indicated above, developed based on the literature on the subject, are identical to those specified in the Act of May 24, 2002, on the Internal Security Agency and the Intelligence Agency.

[392] Counterintelligence Evaluation Regulations (2006), „The Federal Register", https:// www.federalregister.gov/documents/2006/09/29/E6-16049/counterintelligence-evaluation-regulations, 15.01.2016.

6.7. Local Government Entities in the National Security System

Local government entities (municipalities, counties, and voivodeships) form the foundation of the local and regional support and executive subsystems in the national security system. They are responsible for crisis management, population protection, maintaining critical infrastructure, and cooperating with emergency services at the local level. In crisis situations and during wartime, the head of a commune, mayor, or city president becomes the territorial civil protection authority. The main responsibilities of a commune include directing and coordinating rescue operations, warning residents of danger, maintaining shelters, organizing evacuations, and ensuring the continuity of local government operations. The public administration reform of the 1990s led to the decentralization of the state and the delegation of some tasks to local government bodies. The principle of decentralization of public authority, stemming from the Constitution (Article 15), and the resulting statutory regulations in this regard, provided local government administration with An area of activity encompassing diverse competencies and tasks within the structure of public bodies. As stated in Article 16 of the Constitution, local government participates in the exercise of public authority. The substantial portion of public duties entrusted to it by law is performed in its own name and under its own responsibility. Furthermore, the Constitution divides local government's public duties into its own duties and delegated duties. Public duties serving to meet the needs of the local government community are performed by local government units as their own duties, while delegated duties are performed by local government units if this is expressly mandated by statute. Detailed elaboration of these constitutional provisions can be found in the municipal government acts[393], district government[394] and about the voivodeship self-government[395], However, the scope of activities of individual levels of these territorial units varied. Local governments were obligated to perform public tasks, including those directly or indirectly related to security. In addition to public security tasks, local government units were also given a range of competencies related to creating security policy, including defense, crisis management, critical infrastructure protection, civil protection, and civil defense[396].

[393] Ustawa o samorządzie gminnym z dnia 8 marca 1990 r. Dz. U. 1990 Nr 16 poz. 95.
[394] Ustawa o samorządzie powiatowym z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 r. Dz.U.2025.1684.
[395] Ustawa o samorządzie województwa z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 r. Dz. U. 2026.720.
[396] Kuliczkowski, M. (2016). *Administracja publiczna w procesie przygotowań obronnych państwa*. W: Wiśniewski, B., Osierda, A. i Babiński, A. (red.). Administracja bezpieczeństwa. Wybrane problemy: To(s. 53-65). Bielsko Biała: Wyższa Szkoła Administracji w Bielsku Białej
[396] Filaber J. (2009). *Pojęcie bezpieczeństwa publicznego w prawie administracyjnym (wybrane uwagi*). W: Wrocławskie Studia Erazmiańskie. Zeszyty Studenckie. Prace prawnicze, administratywistyczne i historyczne

6.7.1. Municipal Government's Safety Responsibilities

A municipality, as the basic unit of local government, is responsible for meeting the collective needs of its residents. The municipality's responsibilities encompass all local matters not reserved for other local government units. The municipality performs its duties independently and under its own responsibility. It may also perform tasks assigned to it by government administration bodies. The municipal authorities are the municipal council – the legislative and supervisory body – and the mayor (city president), who is the executive body. Among the municipality's own responsibilities is maintaining public order and the safety of citizens, as well as fire and flood protection, including equipping and maintaining the municipal flood warehouse (Article 7, Section 1, Item 14 of the Act of 8 March 1990 on Municipal Government). Furthermore, the municipal authorities' responsibilities regarding safety and flood protection include the development by the mayor of a flood protection operational plan (Article 31a of the Act of 8 March 1990 on Municipal Government). The mayor also declares and cancels emergency and flood alerts. Furthermore, the mayor's authority in the area under review includes the ability to order evacuation from areas at immediate risk if the immediate threat to human life or property cannot be otherwise eliminated (Article 31b of the Act of 8 March 1990 on Local Government). Public safety is also a premise justifying the issuance of emergency regulations, which are acts of local law[397] *(Filaber, 2009, p. 252).* As stated in Article 40 of the Act on Local Government: within the scope not regulated by separate acts or other generally applicable regulations, the municipal council may issue public order regulations if this is necessary to protect the life or health of citizens and to ensure order, peace, and public safety. The mayor (mayor or city president), as the executive body of the municipality, implements the council's resolutions regarding the maintenance of public order within the municipality. The responsibilities of the mayor (mayor or city president) in this area include: issuing administrative decisions; issuing public order regulations in the event of an emergency requiring immediate action; developing an operational plan for flood protection, including announcing and canceling flood alerts and alarms. If the immediate threat cannot be eliminated, this body announces the evacuation of people from areas

(s. 244-262). Wrocław: Katedra Doktryn Politycznych i Prawnych WPAiE UW. m II (s. 53-65). Bielsko Biała: Wyższa Szkoła Administracji w Bielsku Białej

[397] *Ibidem*,(s. 244-262.

at risk. The responsibilities of the mayor (mayor or city president) in maintaining public safety are also reflected in the Police Act[398].

Under Article 11, Section 1 of the Police Act, the police may demand that the appropriate police commander restore the legal order or take action to prevent violations of the law and remove threats to public safety and order. The mayor (city president) should submit his or her requests in writing, and if submitted orally, must confirm them in writing. He or she is also solely responsible for the content of the submitted requests. A uniformed local government unit – the municipal guard – may be established to protect public order within the municipality. Pursuant to Article 1 of the Act of August 29, 1997, on municipal guards[399]. The municipal police are established by resolution of the municipal council, after consulting with the territorially competent provincial police commander. These units are financed from the budgets of the municipalities that established them. Supervision of this unit is exercised by the commune head (mayor, city president), and, in the professional capacity, by the Chief Commander of the Police through the territorially competent provincial police commander. Public safety is also addressed in the Act on State of Natural Disaster. If a state of natural disaster is declared in the municipality, the commune head takes responsibility for public safety and order, including by directing actions aimed at preventing and eliminating its effects (Article 8 of the Act of April 18, 2002 on State of Natural Disaster)[400]. Undoubtedly, a number of important public safety tasks pertaining to local governments are included in the Crisis Management Act. The competent authority for crisis management within a municipality is the commune head (mayor, city president)[401]. The tasks of this body in matters of crisis management include (Article 19, paragraph 2 of the Act of 26 April 2007 on Crisis Management)[402].:

• Managing the monitoring, planning, response, and mitigation of threats within the municipality;

• Implementing civil planning tasks, including:

a) implementing recommendations for the municipal crisis management plan;

[398] Ustawa z dnia 6 kwietnia 1990 r. o Policji (Dz. U. Nr 30, poz.179).
[399] Ustawa z dnia 29 sierpnia 1997 r. o strażach gminnych (Dz.U. 2021.1763).
[400] Ustawa z dnia 18 kwietnia 2002 r. o stanie klęski żywiołowej (Dz.U.2025.112).
[401] https://www.wydawnictwo.wsge.edu.pl/pdf-13797364827?filename=The%20role%20and%20tasks%20of.pdf
[402] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

b) developing and submitting the municipal crisis management plan to the starosta for approval;

• Managing, organizing, and conducting crisis management training, exercises, and drills[403];

• implementing projects arising from the operational plan for municipalities and municipalities with city status;

• preventing, counteracting, and eliminating the effects of terrorist incidents;

• cooperating with the Head of the Internal Security Agency in counteracting, preventing, and eliminating the effects of terrorist incidents;

• organizing and implementing tasks related to critical infrastructure protection.

The designated tasks are performed by the mayor (city mayor) with the assistance of the organizational unit of the municipal (city) office responsible for crisis management. The municipal crisis management team, which performs the tasks assigned to the provincial team, assists the mayor (city mayor) in ensuring the execution of crisis management tasks. The municipal team is managed by the mayor (city mayor) and consists of persons appointed from among the following (Article 19, Section 6 of the Act of 26 April 2007 on Crisis Management)[404]:

• persons employed at the municipal office, municipal organizational units, or auxiliary units;

• employees of joint services, inspections, and guards, delegated by their superiors to perform tasks in this team at the request of the head of the commune (mayor, city president);

• representatives of social rescue organizations.

The head of the commune, mayor, and city president are not obligated to establish a municipal (city) crisis management center, but they are obligated to ensure the implementation of the following tasks within the commune (city) (Article 20, Section 1 of the Act of 26 April 2007 on Crisis Management): 24-hour alerting of members of the municipal crisis management team, and in crisis situations, ensuring 24-hour on-call to ensure the flow of information and

[403] https://www.wydawnictwo.wsge.edu.pl/pdf13797364827?filename=The%20role%20and%20tasks%20of.pdf
[404] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

documentation of ongoing activities; cooperating with crisis management centers of public administration bodies; supervising the operation of the detection and alarm system and the early warning system; cooperating with entities performing environmental monitoring; cooperating with entities conducting rescue, search, and humanitarian operations; Carrying out permanent duty tasks to enhance the state's defense readiness.

6.7.2. The Role of County Government in Security

The County Government Act defines public tasks of a supra-municipal nature, which are performed by the county. The county's scope of activities includes public tasks related to the performance of tasks within the scope of (Article 4 of the Act of 5 June 1998 on County Government)[405]: environmental and nature protection, public order and citizen safety, flood protection, including equipping and maintaining the district flood warehouse, fire protection and preventing other extraordinary threats to human life, health, and the environment, and defense. The district head also develops an operational flood protection plan and announces and cancels flood emergencies and alerts. In urgent matters related to threats to public interest, directly threatening health and life, and in matters that could cause significant material losses, the district head takes the necessary actions within the district board's jurisdiction. In addition to the district head, the district council, as a legislative and supervisory body, also has a certain contribution to the implementation of safety tasks within the district. As stipulated in the Act on District Self-Government (Article 12), the exclusive competences of the district council include, among others: adopting a district crime prevention program and protecting citizen safety and public order, and assessing the state of fire safety and flood protection in the district. Additionally, in cases defined by law, the district government may perform tasks delegated to it by specific acts of government administration, related to eliminating direct threats, including threats to public safety and order. The district performs these tasks through its own bodies or organizational units. They may also be performed by specialized services of the combined district administration, supervised by the starosta (county head). In conclusion, some tasks related to public safety at the district level should be considered its own tasks; on the other hand, tasks in this area may also be imposed by the government administration. The starosta, as the head of district services, inspections, and guards, has the following competences (Article 30, Section 3 of the Act of 5 June 1998 on District Self-Government)[406]: appointing and

[405] Ustawa o samorządzie powiatowym z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 r. Dz.U.2025.1684.
[406] Ustawa o samorządzie powiatowym z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 r. Dz.U.2025.1684.

dismissing the heads of these units, in consultation with the voivode, approving their action plans, agreeing on joint activities of these units within the district, managing joint activities of these units in special situations, and commissioning inspections in justified cases.

In order to carry out the staroste's duties regarding supervision over district services, inspections, and guards, as well as tasks specified in laws regarding public order and citizen safety – in accordance with the provisions of the Act on District Self-Government (Article 38a): a safety and order commission is established. The commission's duties include, among others: assessing threats to public order and citizen safety within the district; providing opinions on the work of the police and other district services, inspections, and guards, as well as organizational units performing public order and citizen safety tasks within the district; preparing a draft district crime prevention program and public order and citizen safety program; providing opinions on drafts of other programs for cooperation between the police and other district services, inspections, and guards, as well as organizational units performing public order and citizen safety tasks within the district; Providing opinions on the draft district budget – with regard to the safety of citizens. If a state of natural disaster is declared in the area of more than one municipality within the district, the district head takes responsibility for public safety and order, including by directing actions aimed at preventing and eliminating its effects (Article 8 of the Act of 18 April 2002 on the State of Natural Disaster)[407]. The starosta is also responsible for crisis management within the district. According to statutory provisions, his or her tasks in crisis management include (Article 17, Section 2 of the Act of 26 April 2007 on Crisis Management)[408].

The responsibilities of the District Office include: • managing the monitoring, planning, response, and removal of threats within the district, • implementing civil planning tasks (including developing and submitting the district crisis management plan to the voivode for approval, implementing recommendations for district crisis management plans, issuing recommendations for the municipal crisis management plan to municipal authorities, and approving the municipal crisis management plan), • managing, organizing, and conducting crisis management training, exercises, and drills, implementing projects arising from the operational plan for the operation of districts and cities with district rights, preventing, counteracting, and removing the effects of terrorist incidents, • cooperating with the head of the

[407] Ustawa z dnia 18 kwietnia 2002 r. o stanie klęski żywiołowej (Dz.U.2025.112).
[408] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

Internal Security Agency in counteracting, preventing, and removing the effects of terrorist incidents, • organizing and implementing tasks related to critical infrastructure protection.

The District Head appoints a District Crisis Management Team to assist in the execution of crisis management tasks. This team performs the tasks assigned to the provincial team within the district. The District Head manages the team's work. The team is composed of individuals appointed from among those employed by the district office, district organizational units, or organizational units supporting the heads of consolidated services, inspections, and district guards, and representatives of non-governmental rescue organizations. To ensure the flow of information for crisis management and to perform other tasks in this area, the district head establishes a district crisis management center, defining its organization, location, and operational procedures. The district head fulfills the obligation to organize the district crisis management center through the combined district administration, which consists of the district office, the district labor office (a district organizational unit), and organizational units supporting the heads of district services, inspections, and guards. As a result, the district head may locate the headquarters of the district crisis management center at, among other locations, the District Headquarters of the State Fire Service, the District Police Headquarters, or the district office. In towns that are also the seats of counties and cities with county rights, a joint crisis management center may be established, based on an agreement between these local government units, covering the areas of both local government units.

6.7.3. Security Responsibilities and Competencies of the Voivodeship Government

The problematic nature of the security responsibilities of the voivodeship government stems from the duality of public authority in the voivodeship. This refers to the coexistence of two separate management structures: the voivodeship board, with the voivodeship marshal as the executive body, and the government administration, headed by the voivode. An analysis of the voivodeship and voivodeship government's responsibilities in the area of public security indicates that the voivode's responsibilities include responding to security threats and addressing their effects, as well as most crisis management tasks. The voivodeship government, on the other hand, is primarily responsible for preventive measures[409]. The voivodeship self-government performs tasks of a voivodeship nature, including in the scope (Article 14,

[409] Mroczko F. (2012). Zarządzanie kryzysowe w sytuacjach zagrożeń niemilitarnych. Zarys problemów regionu dolnośląskiego. Wałbrzych: Wałbrzyska Wyższa Szkoła Zarządzania i Przedsiębiorczości.

paragraph 1 of the Act of 5 June 1998 on the voivodeship self-government[410]. These tasks concern:

• environmental protection,

• water management, including flood protection, and in particular the equipment and maintenance of provincial flood control warehouses, defense, and public safety.

The provincial government performs public tasks of a provincial nature, as defined by law, in its own name and under its own responsibility. The most important tasks performed by the provincial government in the area of public safety include: cooperation with the Crisis Management Department of the Provincial Office during states of emergency and combating natural disasters; implementing the voivode's orders issued during states of emergency; establishing tasks for individual units of the Office in the event of a threat and monitoring their implementation; and participating in operational and defense planning within the voivodeship.

The bodies of the provincial government are established by the provincial assembly and the voivodeship board. The provincial assembly – a supervisory and decision-making body – is composed of councilors elected in direct elections, while the provincial board is a collegial body composed of five members, including the provincial marshal as the board chair, the vice-chair, and members. In urgent matters involving a direct threat to public interest, a direct threat to health and life, and matters that could result in significant material losses, the provincial marshal, who manages the day-to-day affairs of the province, takes the necessary actions within the competence of the provincial board. Actions undertaken in this manner must be submitted for approval at the next provincial board meeting. The provincial marshal is outside the system of crisis management bodies. Nevertheless, the involvement of the provincial government in crisis management activities is legally mandated. However, apart from the obligation of the voivodeship board to "(...) participate in the implementation of tasks in the field of crisis management, including civil planning, arising from its competences", the legislator did not specify the scope of activities in more detail (Article 15 of the Act of 26 April 2007 on crisis management)[411]. The voivodeship marshal also appoints a representative to the voivodeship crisis management team. Voivodeship governments, as a matter of general obligation, may

[410] Ustawa o samorządzie województwa z dnia 5 czerwca 1998 r. Dz. U. 2026.720.

[411] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

participate in security-related activities through the use of existing financial and legal instruments. This includes subsidizing the operation of guard services and inspections based on the laws establishing these services, and providing financial assistance to lower local government units responsible for security matters.

The role of local government units in implementing tasks related to ensuring the safety of local communities should not be limited to merely fulfilling statutory obligations. Threat prevention also plays a crucial role in shaping public safety. This process may include, among other things: organizing social life, especially for children and youth, promoting safe attitudes and behaviors, safety education, and activating the local community. The involvement of local governments in the process of shaping public safety and cooperation in this regard with security executives, i.e., the Police, Municipal Guard, Fire Department, and other services, inspections, and guards, is an important element influencing the level of safety within the area under their administration and allows for more effective resolution of social problems.

6.8. The Civil Protection and Civil Defense System – Nature and Importance

The civil protection and civil defense system is a coordinated state mechanism whose primary purpose is to protect human life and health, property, and the environment in peacetime (natural disasters, catastrophes) and wartime (military operations). An analysis of the relevant literature reveals that theoretical studies abound with definitions of civil protection. There are numerous publications addressing its essence, but these definitions often differ in their relationship to civil defense, crisis management, and rescue systems. To date, no definition of civil protection has been developed that would specify its detailed relationship to crisis management, civil defense, and rescue, and would be considered the most appropriate and frequently cited. Additionally, the lack of a single, generally accepted theoretical definition of population protection may lead to difficulties in its practical application and in its use in legal regulations. Some scholars see a closer relationship between civil defense and civil defense. Others identify it more closely with crisis management. Still other theses point to a close relationship between population protection and rescue operations. Theorists specializing in population protection emphasize that population protection is one of the most important tasks of the state and consists primarily in protecting life, health, property, and the environment in which people live[412]. Scientists also agree that civil protection tasks are undertaken to counter

[412] https://safetyproject.pl/zadania-realizowane-w-ramach-ochrony-ludnosci-w-polsce-w-ujeciu-teoretycznym-i-

threats caused by natural forces and human activity. Scientists studying civil protection tasks in Poland during peacetime, modeled on crisis management, most often classify them into four groups of initiatives: threat prevention, preparation for taking control of threats, response (including rescue), and remediation. What is civil defense? Civil defense is a system whose purpose is to protect the population, workplaces and public utilities, cultural assets, rescue and provide assistance to victims of war, and cooperate in combating natural disasters and environmental threats and removing their effects[413].

Organizing an effective civil protection system is a key element in building a country's defense capabilities. Civil defense's mission is not only to create forces and resources to counter non-military threats, but also to prepare civilians for military operations in the event of an armed conflict[414].

The concept of civil defense began to be discussed in the international community after the end of World War I in 1918. The consequences of Germany's use of new and then-unknown chemical weapons and the enormous tragedies of civilians who died on a mass scale due to bombings sparked discussions about the growing brutality of modern armed conflicts. These events demonstrated to the then-leaders of state the potential for significant military impact not only on armies and military installations but also on civilians and civilian facilities, often located deep behind the front lines. Initial attempts were made to create defense systems that, in addition to state structures, would protect and defend populations and facilities during wartime operations[415]. Initially, when creating the first systems for protecting civilians and civilian facilities, anti-aircraft and anti-gas defense were primarily considered. France, Great Britain, and Germany were the first European countries to develop such systems. The Anti-Gas Defense Society and the Air Defense League were also established in Poland. This institution can be considered the first attempt to establish a civil defense system in Poland. An act on anti-aircraft and anti-gas defense was also drafted and passed by the Sejm in 1934. This legal act was intended to formally shape the process of creating a civil protection system in Poland[416]. World War II demonstrated the need to deepen work on creating systems for protecting

prawnym/#ujecie-teoretyczne-do2025-r--istota-izadania-ochrony-ludnosci

[413] Protokół I do Konwencji genewskich z 12 sierpnia 1949 roku. dotyczący ochrony ofiar międzynarodowych konfliktów zbrojnych.

[414] Marek, A., 2020, Obrona cywilna jako element systemu obrony terytorialnej Szwecji, Wiedza Obronna 1/2020, Warszawa: Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej, s. 95-105.

[415] Łotocki, B., 2016, Obrona cywilna jako pozamilitarny element systemu obronnego państwa, Wiedza Obronna 3-4/2016, Warszawa: Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej, 117-137.

[416] Suwart, J., 1986, Kronika Obrony Cywilnej w Polsce (1922-1984), Warszawa: Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej.

the civilian population. The brutality of the conflicting parties, particularly Germany and the Soviet Union, which resulted in numerous civilian casualties, sparked discussions about formalizing the issue of civil protection in international law.

On August 12, 1949, in Geneva, Switzerland, member states of the United Nations (UN) signed the Protocol on the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts. This document formally defined the concept of civil defense and comprehensively defined its operation during armed conflict, natural disasters, and environmental threats, thus formally ensuring the protection of civilians and civilian assets in war and peacetime[417]. It is worth mentioning that after the adoption of the 1949 Protocol, UN member states began building national civil defense systems. Most countries adopted a model in which civil defense is managed by the Minister of Interior on behalf of the government, with the system structured into central and local levels.

In Poland, civil defense (OC) was established in 1973, when the Council of Ministers, by resolution, defined its organization, purpose, and the tasks of public administration bodies, economic and social entities in this regard. At the central level, the civil defense system in Poland was managed by the Minister of National Defense as a representative of the government, who cooperated in this area with the National Defense Committee (KOK). The Deputy Minister of National Defense served as the Head of the National Civil Defense. Voivodes, city mayors, and heads of municipalities were appointed heads of local civil defense structures. The assumptions, purpose, and tasks of civil defense were included in the 1967 Act on the Universal Obligation to Protect the Citizens, which became its main legal basis[418]. Civil defense structures in Poland were composed of members of volunteer fire departments and law enforcement agencies, such as the Voluntary Reserves of the Citizens' Militia (ORMO), territorial defense soldiers, and members of industrial guards. Civil defense members were required to participate in regular exercises. Their primary tasks included supporting the state in the event of natural disasters, as well as the army and public order services in times of war. Following the political changes in Poland in 1989 and the beginning of the systemic transformation, the civil defense system underwent significant changes[419].

[417] Tokarski, M., 2013, Funkcjonowanie obrony cywilnej w aspekcie źródeł prawa, Przegląd Naukowo Metodyczny – Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa 4/2013, Poznań: Wyższa Szkoła Bezpieczeństwa, 121-139.
[418] Wolszczak, E., 2016, Obrona cywilna – instytucja wyparta przez rozwiązania w zakresie zarządzania kryzysowego?, Zeszyty Naukowe 2/2016, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 255-271.
[419] Kalinowski, R., 2011, Obrona cywilna w Polsce, Siedlce: Uniwersytet Przyrodniczo--Humanistyczny.

On September 28, 1993, the Council of Ministers issued a regulation on civil defense, which redefined and clarified the responsibilities of public administration and state bodies in this area. Steps were taken to transfer the authority to organize and manage civil defense to the Minister of Interior. The goal was to create a system for civil protection and crisis management that would not be subordinated to the armed forces and would not perform military tasks. These steps were intended to align the Polish civil defense system with the civil protection systems of the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO) and the European Union (EU). Within these organizations, civil defense is handled by the Interior Ministers of the member states and specially established committees composed of representatives of the member states[420].

In 1997, the Minister of Interior took over the management of civil defense in Poland. That same year, a major flood hit Poland, demonstrating that the civil defense system was incapable of fulfilling its tasks in the face of a threat. An attempt was made to reorganize the civil defense structure to streamline operations in crisis situations. The attempt was to create a system modeled after France and Germany, where civil defense is largely based on emergency notification centers that coordinate the actions of state agencies and services in emergency situations. The opportunity for these changes came with the administrative reform of 1999, which forced adjustments to the civil defense structures in the field[421]. Following the changes, the Chief Commander of the State Fire Service (PSP) became the Head of National Civil Defense. At the local level, the responsibilities of civil defense managers began to be exercised by voivodes in voivodeships, starosts in poviats, and mayors, commune heads, and city presidents in municipalities. The National Headquarters of the PSP became the headquarters of civil defense in Poland[422]. The reason for this decision was that the fire service structures in Poland were the best organized of all law enforcement services. Therefore, the concept was developed to build the National Rescue and Firefighting System (KSRG), which was to become a key element of the civil defense system in Poland. The legal basis for the new civil defense structure was the Council of Ministers' regulation of June 25, 2002, regarding the detailed scope of activities of the Chief of the National Civil Defense, and the Chiefs of Civil Defense in Voivodeships, Counties, and Municipalities[423].

[420] Gryz, J., Kitler, W., 2007, *System reagowania kryzysowego*, Toruń: Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek.
[421] Skomra, W., 2010, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe w Polsce. Praktyczny przewodnik po nowelizacji ustawy*, Wrocław, Presscom
[422] Szmitkowski, P., 2012, *System ochrony ludności w Polsce – historia i współczesność*, Gdynia: Akademia Marynarki Wojennej.
[423] Krynojewski, F. R., 2012, *Obrona cywilna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Warszawa: Difin.

The subordination of the Civil Defense Service (OC) structures to the State Fire Service effectively halted the existing civil defense system, which was dominated by the National Fire Service (KSRG) structures. An attempt to remedy this situation was the passage of the Act of April 26, 2007, on Crisis Management (ZK). The Act introduced a new system for coordinating state actions in crisis situations. At the central level, state security is managed by the Prime Minister, who heads the Government Crisis Management Team, with the support of the Government Security Centre (RCB). At the local level, security is managed by: voivodes in voivodeships; starosts in poviats; and mayors, commune heads, and city presidents in municipalities, who head crisis management teams and with the support of local crisis management centers[424]. The adoption of the Crisis Management Act improved and streamlined the coordination of state authorities' actions during emergencies. However, this did not resolve the issue of the civil defense system in Poland. The civil defense system was not fulfilling its intended purpose in practice.

The increased military threat from the Russian Federation following the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine in 2014 and the full-scale invasion of that country in 2022 has led to a renewed discussion regarding the preparation of civilians and their protection in crisis situations, including wartime. In addition to preparing the system to respond to natural hazards, the need for preparedness for military threats has emerged[425]. In 2017, a new branch of the Polish Armed Forces was established – the Territorial Defense Force (WOT). These soldiers are tasked with supporting operational forces and, importantly, implementing projects in the areas of crisis management, combating natural disasters and eliminating their effects, property protection, and search and rescue operations[426]. Territorial Defence Force soldiers in crisis situations, in the event of natural disasters such as floods, storms, gales, or also during the COVID-19 pandemic, are an important element of support for the state security system, in practice fulfilling the role of civil defense in Poland[427].

However, the establishment of the Territorial Defence Force (WOT) also failed to resolve the issue of organizing the civil liability insurance system. After the outbreak of war in Ukraine

[424] Wolszczak, E., 2016, *Obrona cywilna – instytucja wyparta przez rozwiązania w zakresie zarządzania kryzysowego*?, Zeszyty Naukowe 2/2016, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 255-271.
[425] Łotocki, B., 2016, *Obrona cywilna jako pozamilitarny element systemu obronnego państwa,* Wiedza Obronna 3-4/2016, Warszawa: Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej, 117-137.
[426] Ustawa z dnia 16 listopada 2016 roku. o zmianie ustawy o powszechnym obowiązku obrony Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej oraz niektórych innych ustaw.
[427] Włodarczyk, B., 2023, *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej jako element rekonstrukcji polskiej obrony cywilnej, Bezpieczeństwo.* Teoria i Praktyka 4/2023, Kraków: Uniwersytet Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego, 161-172.

in February 2022, the Polish parliament passed the Homeland Defense Act, which repealed the legal provisions regarding civil liability insurance in Poland, which were contained in the 1967 Universal Defense Obligation Act. Civil defense was to be included in the new Civil Protection Act, which comprehensively redefined and reformulated the assumptions, structure, and organization of the civil liability insurance system in Poland. In addition to civil defense and crisis management, the Civil Protection Act was to introduce new states of emergency and the issue of financing and building shelters. The Minister of Interior was to be responsible for civil protection, with the support of the State Fire Service Headquarters, which was to build local structures for the civil defense system through volunteer fire departments[428]. Following the change of government in Poland in 2023, another draft of this law was drafted. The new draft places the Minister of Interior in charge of civil protection. The scope of services performing civil protection tasks was also expanded. A civil defense corps was established, consisting of emergency services personnel, some military reserves, and former uniformed services officers. Furthermore, it was specified that approximately 0.3% of GDP would be allocated annually for civil liability insurance[429]. It is worthwhile to compare the concept of civil defense in Poland with the civil protection systems in other European and non-European countries, such as the United States and Canada. An assessment of the current civil liability insurance system in Poland will also serve to define a vision of an effective security system that should function within the civil protection dimension. In academic and expert discussions on civil defense in Poland, there is a widespread belief that in practice, this issue is nonexistent within the state's security structures. Everyone agrees that in recent years, the state has done nothing to address this fact, and has even contributed to the disintegration of the civil defense system and, as a result, its non-functioning[430].

There are disagreements among experts regarding the concept of building a civil defense system in Poland. One proposal is to create a separate Ministry of Civil Protection, which would be responsible for emergency services performing anti-crisis operations in emergency situations. Another is to integrate civil defense with the crisis management system established

[428] Kośka, M., 2023, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe, ochrona ludności, obrona cywilna – obecne i projektowe rozwiązania prawne dotyczące zadań elementów zarządzających szczebla krajowego*, Wiedza Obronna 3/2023, Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej, 1-21.
[429] Pachecki, K., 2024, *Czy to najgorsza ustawa o obronie cywilnej w historii? Wątpliwości wobec niej są poważne.* Dostępne pod adresem: https://klubjagiellonski.pl/2024/10/25/ najgorsza-ustawa-o-obronie-cywilnej-w-historii-watpliwosci-sa-powazne/ [dostęp: 15 grudnia 2024].
[430] S. Pawłuszko, T., 2023, *Kryzys obrony cywilnej w Polsce. Perspektywa instytucjonalna,*
Studia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego 30/2023, Warszawa: Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna, 41-62.

under the Crisis Management Act of 2007. Another proposal is to create a civil defense system based on public administration, managed by the central government, and at the local level by the relevant local governments. Most experts support the concept of a civil defense system under the Ministry of Interior and Administration. According to Dr. Franciszek Krynojewski, author of numerous publications on civil defense and a former member of the National Civil Defense, the structures of the state's civil protection system must be located within the Ministry of Interior and Administration, because only through this public institution can rescue services be effectively managed and civil defense linked to the crisis management system[431]. A similar point of view is presented by the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration from 2001 to 2004. In his opinion, civil defense is a broader issue than defense, understood as the defense of a state's own territory. He also emphasized the need for the Minister of Internal Affairs to serve as the head of the Civil Defense Office due to his high political position, which allows for quick decision-making in the event of a threat[432].

According to some researchers, the country's civil defense system could be created based on the structures of the Territorial Defense Forces established in 2017. According to Józef Marczak and Ryszard Jakubczak's concept, one of the strategic goals of the Territorial Defense Forces is to immediately support the authorities and society in rescuing and securing people, property, and the environment in situations of natural disasters, technical accidents, and other disasters and needs[433]. A comparison of the Territorial Defence Forces and civil defence reveals similarities in their performance of activities in the area of protecting people and property from the effects of natural disasters, as well as in the process of shaping appropriate civic attitudes in society and maintaining cooperation within Poland's internal security structures. Therefore, it can be assumed that, to some extent, the Territorial Defence Forces fulfill a civil defence role[434].

In addition to concepts regarding the construction of the management structures of the civil defense system in Poland, authors in scientific publications also highlight other issues related

[431] Pacek, B., 2018, *Wyzwania w zakresie możliwości odbudowy Obrony Cywilnej w Polsce, Współczesna obrona cywilna – wyzwania, ryzyko, zagrożenia,* w: Gawęcka J., Wojtycza J. (red.), Współczesna Obrona Cywilna: wyzwania, ryzyko, zagrożenia, Piotrków Trybunalski, Naukowe Wydawnictwo Piotrkowskie, 9-31

[432] Janik, K., 2021, *Działania ministra spraw wewnętrznych i administracji na rzecz zapewnienia bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego w warunkach zewnętrznego zagrożenia państwa i w czasie wojny – wybrane problemy,* Wiedza Obronna 2/2021, Warszawa: Towarzystwo Wiedzy Obronnej, 71-86.

[433] Jakubczak, R., Marczak, J., 2014, *Raport strategiczny: Siły Zbrojne RP w drugiej dekadzie XXI wieku. Koncepcja strategiczna Obrony Terytorialnej RP.*, Warszawa: Akademia Obrony Narodowej.

[434] Włodarczyk, B., 2023, *Wojska Obrony Terytorialnej jako element rekonstrukcji polskiej obrony cywilnej, Bezpieczeństwo. Teoria i Praktyka* 4/2023, Kraków: Uniwersytet Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego, 161-172.

to this topic. One of the most frequently cited is the lack of a unified legal basis for civil defense in Poland. Following the passage of the Homeland Defense Act in 2022, all legal acts applicable to the civil liability insurance system were repealed. Furthermore, the Crisis Management Act has been in force since 2007, and its provisions can also be assigned to certain activities within the field of civil liability insurance[435]. This problem is to be resolved by adopting the Civil Protection and Civil Defense Act. According to the Deputy Minister of Interior, former Chief Commander of the State Fire Service, and head of the Civil Defense Office, Polish civil defense legislation should be unified, as it leads to a lack of coherence in the crisis management activities of emergency services. The act should clearly define the concept of civil protection, the civil defense system, as well as the public order institutions and social organizations that would coordinate their tasks in this area[436].

Another issue widely discussed in publications is the problem of financing the construction of shelters and civil protection infrastructure. Experts point to the lack of systematic procedures in this area. Bogusław Pacek notes that no action is being taken to maintain existing protective infrastructure. As a result, the number of shelters and civil protection buildings is decreasing year by year. The costs of building protective infrastructure should come from a dedicated fund, not from local government units, which often lack large budgets. Effective implementation of this concept can only be guaranteed by increasing the involvement of funds from the central budget and greater funding for local government units responsible for building civil defense structures. Another troubling problem related to civil defense in Poland is the insufficient utilization of the potential of rescue services. Experts warn that, besides the State Fire Service, the civil liability insurance system does not include any other rescue services that ensure safety in emergency situations. The Fire Department, being practically the only civil defense service, is heavily burdened during a crisis, as its statutory duties already mandate it to combat and prevent threats to the population and the natural environment. Many researchers note that civil defense cannot operate like a mass levy. The operations of rescue services in this area must be clearly defined and have their place within the civil protection system. Economic factors should also be considered when establishing the civil defense system in Poland. Therefore, instead of establishing a new civil defense formation, existing rescue services conducting crisis

[435] Pawłuszko, T., 2023, *Kryzys obrony cywilnej w Polsce. Perspektywa instytucjonalna, Studia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego* 30/2023, Warszawa: Wojskowa Akademia Techniczna, 41-62.
[436] Pacek, B., 2018, *Wyzwania w zakresie możliwości odbudowy Obrony Cywilnej w Polsce, Współczesna obrona cywilna – wyzwania, ryzyko, zagrożenia*, w: Gawęcka J., Wojtycza J. (red.), Współczesna Obrona Cywilna: wyzwania, ryzyko, zagrożenia, Piotrków Trybunalski, Naukowe Wydawnictwo Piotrkowskie, 9-31.

management operations should be modified. According to many authors of scientific studies on civil defense, this issue requires systemic solutions. The current civil liability insurance (OC) system in Poland is insufficient to ensure the state responds appropriately and is able to conduct crisis management activities in a crisis. An effective and efficient civil defense system must be based on the structures of the central government. Discussions are ongoing regarding the state bodies that would manage the OC in Poland. Most publications emphasize that it should be subordinated to the Ministry of Interior and Administration. Some experts, however, emphasize that it is worthwhile to engage the Territorial Defense Forces, established in 2017, in developing the civil defense system. Experts consider the lack of a unified legal basis, increased funding for the construction of civil protection facilities, and insufficient utilization of the potential of emergency services to be among the greatest challenges in building a civil defense system.

Comparing civil defense systems in EU and NATO member states, we conclude that they focus on crisis management and civil protection, which constitute a distinct area of state action. They are also dominated by the principle of ministerial responsibility for matters within their competence. In most countries, a single minister, most often the Minister of Internal Affairs, coordinates all civil defense matters. The civil protection system is built on all levels of public authority, from central to local. Responsibility for national security is therefore shared not only among state authorities but also local governments. The role of local authorities in these systems is crucial, as they are directly at the civilian population's side in a threat situation and organize the first anti-crisis measures[437]. Civil defense services typically include fire departments, police, and medical services, supported by municipal services, the military, and non-governmental organizations. The goal of most systems is to effectively prevent peacetime threats, respond quickly and decisively to crisis situations, and prepare services, public institutions, and the public to organize civil protection in wartime.

In the event of armed conflict, the role of civil defense systems is to perform humanitarian operations. Systems are also designed to be prepared for major natural disasters, in order to coordinate international actions. The one built in Switzerland is considered the most exemplary civil defense system on the European continent. The Swiss system is based on the integration of federal and local executive authorities, which must cooperate in a crisis and be prepared for

[437] Chamera, D., Sroka, W., 2001, *Systemy bezpieczeństwa i reagowania kryzysowego w krajach zachodnich*, Technika Transportu Szynowego 11-12/2001, Radom: Instytut Naukowo-Wydawniczy TTS, 35-39.

the complex nature of threats. Coordinating bodies play a key role. Responsibility for the implementation of tasks related to the protection of the civilian population rests with the lowest level of government, namely the cantons and municipalities. The Swiss system is divided into civil defense (wartime) and civil protection (peacetime). The integrated system is structured by the police, fire department, emergency medical services, technical organizations, and civil defense units. The services' responsibilities include rescue operations, critical infrastructure protection, care for those in need, protection of cultural assets, and ensuring the operation of communications and transportation systems and protective facilities. The legal basis for its operation is the provisions of the Swiss Constitution and the Federal Civil Protection and Defense Act.[438]. The Swiss civil defense system is headed by the Federal Council, which comprises the army and the Federal Office for Civil Protection (BABS), headquartered in Bern, the main body coordinating the services' activities. Direct actions are carried out by municipalities and cantons, which are responsible for the services carrying out crisis management tasks. Federal authorities support local authorities in carrying out civil defense activities. The office serves as a support to municipalities and cantons, particularly in the area of specialized services and capabilities. It supports information exchange and coordination and is responsible for the organization and operation of the national emergency center in Zurich, which is used in emergency situations. The office is headed by a director. BABS's main responsibilities also include developing civil protection strategies, organizing civil defense training, preparing critical infrastructure for threats, and planning and assessing risks to national security. The Council, in turn, makes decisions regarding military support.

The Swiss Armed Forces can be deployed in crisis situations when civilian resources are insufficient to combat the threat. The federal level may provide support to cantons or assume coordination when the threat affects at least two cantons, but only with the consent and at the request of local authorities. The Council and Office are composed of specialists and experts in the field of civil defense, who formulate the basic principles of the system and create recommendations in this regard for cantons and municipalities. Local authorities, on the other hand, play an executive role. The competent authorities are the heads of civil defense units in the cantons and municipalities, as well as the services operating on site, such as the police, fire department, ambulance service, and technical organizations[439].

[438] Trocha, J., 2017, U*nikalny charakter systemu ochrony ludności cywilnej w Konfederacji Szwajcarskiej, Obronność* 1/2017, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 196-215.
[439] Trocha, J., 2017, *Unikalny charakter systemu ochrony ludności cywilnej w Konfederacji Szwajcarskiej,*

The private sector also plays a significant role in Switzerland's civil defense system. These primarily include associations specializing in rescue, such as the Swiss Red Cross, the Samaritans, the Swiss Rescue Association, the Military-Sanitary Association, and the volunteer mountain, air, and water rescue services, as well as volunteer fire departments. Companies also participate in the civil security system. Their role is to maintain mandatory stocks of manufactured products and ensure the safety of facilities in use, including critical infrastructure. Citizens also play a key role in the Swiss civil defense system. They regularly undergo military and civil protection training. They are also subject to obligations arising from their service during threats to national security. As part of their civil defense preparations, municipalities and cantons conduct safety education for local communities, which also strengthens civic awareness and the readiness to respond quickly in crisis situations. The comprehensiveness and involvement of many entities, and above all, citizens, make the Swiss civil defense system one of the best in Europe and the world. It's also worth exploring some of the oldest civil defense systems in Europe – the French and German ones. In both France and Germany, local authorities play a significant role, with responsibilities including crisis management[440]. The most important decision-making body in both systems is the Minister of the Interior. In France, the military plays a significant role in the civil defense system, particularly the Operational Reserve, which consists of former soldiers and civilian volunteers. This corps is tasked with supporting the French army in times of emergency and is also responsible for the safety of the civilian population, while the regular army will carry out crisis management operations. A key element of the system is also the Citizens' Reserve, composed entirely of volunteers, which is intended to support French public services and administration in crisis situations. Both of these formations are designed to protect society in times of war and peace[441].

Local authorities also play an important role in the French system, tasked with preventing all risks and threats to the safety of citizens, as well as rescuing and providing assistance to victims of disasters and other crises. Local authorities also prepare civil defense programs for their residents. Germany defines civil defense as all non-military projects, including anti-crisis tasks performed in peacetime, during catastrophes, emergencies, and natural disasters. The

*O*bronność 1/2017, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 196-215.

[440] Chamera, D., Sroka, W., 2001, *Systemy bezpieczeństwa i reagowania kryzysowego w krajach zachodnich,* Technika Transportu Szynowego 11-12/2001, Radom: Instytut Naukowo-Wydawniczy TTS, 35-39.

[441] Młynarski, T., Soloch, K., Thirlet, D.*, Doświadczenia obrony terytorialnej we Francji, Bezpieczeństwo – Teoria* i Praktyka 3/2017, Kraków: Uniwersytet Jana Andrzeja Frycza Modrzewskiego, 183-195.

German civil defense system, similar to that in France, is based on the actions of local authorities. The Länder manage anti-crisis measures exclusively in peacetime. In wartime, the highest commanding authority is the Minister of the Interior, acting under the authority of the federal government. The German civil defense system differs from the French system in that local authorities are more responsible for the safety of their citizens. Districts, in particular, play a significant role. They have special crisis units within their offices that directly deal with protecting the population in emergency situations. District authorities can also request support from federal authorities, the military, and representatives of the private sector[442].

The main rescue units and forces that underpin the German civil defense system are the fire department and the technical rescue service. Their duties include rescue operations, civil protection, technical assistance, environmental protection, medical support, and the transport of casualties. These services are obligated to cooperate in the event of a threat. Private sector institutions can also assist the services during crisis management. However, Germany's civil defense system has been struggling in recent years. The most important challenge is the construction of protective facilities and shelters for the civilian population. This challenge has not been given sufficient priority. As a result, there are too few such structures in Germany. Only a small percentage of the population could benefit from shelters. Another problem is the weakening of the national threat warning system. Fewer and fewer administrative units maintain such centers, which makes it difficult to inform civilians about threats in crisis situations[443].

A comparative analysis of the US and Canadian systems reveals that these countries have similar civil defense systems. Management responsibilities are divided between federal and local authorities. In the case of the United States, civil defense, in addition to state structures appointed by governors, is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), headquartered in Washington, D.C. Established in 1978 to replace six ineffective federal agencies, FEMA's mission is to report threats, plan, and manage activities related to the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters. The agency heads the Integrated Emergency Management System, a structure established to prepare public institutions and the population

[442] Chamera, D., Sroka, W., 2001, Systemy bezpieczeństwa i reagowania kryzysowego w krajach zachodnich, Technika Transportu Szynowego 11-12/2001, Radom: Instytut Naukowo-Wydawniczy TTS, 35-39.
[443] Landowski, M., Winnicki, K., System obrony cywilnej Niemiec jako model cywilnego planowania i zarządzania kryzysowego, Zeszyty Naukowe Akademii Morskiej 4/2004, Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Morskiej, 188-195.

for all types of threats. The agency includes a dedicated civil defense corps dedicated to providing assistance to the population in the event of a crisis. Initially, FEMA was managed by the Department of Defense, but after the September 11, 2001, attacks, the agency was integrated into the Department of Homeland Security. At the state level, governors can organize civil defense in any way they choose, taking into account the standards set by FEMA and applicable federal civil defense laws[444]. Canada's civil defense system, like that of the United States, is divided into federal and provincial levels, as well as municipal levels covering large uninhabited areas and large metropolitan areas. Civil protection and civil defense efforts are coordinated by the federal Emergency Preparedness Agency of Canada, located within the Ministry of National Defence[445]. The Canadian system, however, is not very uniform. Local authorities have a significant degree of autonomy in establishing civil defense within their jurisdictions. As a result, the federal level, despite support from the Agency, has no impact on the plans of local authorities. Experts emphasize the need to establish a new crisis response agency in Canada or to increase the powers of existing federal bodies. Similar to Canada, the civil defense system was developed in the United Kingdom. It is also composed of three levels: central, local, and regional. Civil defense in the United Kingdom is based on the Integrated Crisis Management System. At the central level, civil defense is managed by the Minister of Internal Affairs. However, unlike the Canadian system, the British model is more centralized. At the local and regional levels, civil defense authorities do not have sufficient forces and resources to combat threats on their own. The primary responsibility for commanding a crisis rests with the central government. Local and regional authorities conduct crisis response activities on-site during an emergency, but they perform their tasks based on decisions from the British Ministry of Internal Affairs, rather than independently[446]. Comparing and describing the civil defense systems of European countries and the United States and Canada, it can be seen that in all of them, the Minister of Interior plays a primary role as a representative of the central government. Local authorities, responsible for carrying out crisis management tasks in local emergencies, also play a significant role.

[444] Kolmann, P., 2020, *Wybrane rozwiązania organizacyjne systemu ochrony ludności w Stanach Zjednoczonych Ameryki na rzecz budowania odporności społeczeństwa na zagrożenia*, Civitas et Lex 3/2020, Olsztyn: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko--Mazurskiego, s.33-40

[445] Skomra, W., 2007, *Funkcjonowanie organów administracji publicznej w czasie klęsk żywiołowych w wybranych krajach,* Bezpieczeństwo i Technika Pożarnicza 1/2007, Józefów, Centrum Naukowo-Badawcze Ochrony Przeciwpożarowej – Państwowy Instytut Badawczy, 7-53.

[446] Gołębiewski, J., 2014, *Zintegrowany system zarządzania kryzysowego Zjednoczonego Królestwa Wielkiej Brytanii i Irlandii*, Przegląd Obrony Cywilnej 3/2014, Warszawa: Szkoła Główna Służby Pożarniczej, 34-35.

The Polish civil defense model, recently adopted, also aims to develop a system based on the leadership of the Ministry of Interior and the involvement of local authorities in the process of organizing public protection against threats. The civil defense model in Poland after 1989 was based on the experience of Western European countries. The concept of building a civil defense system based on the Ministry of National Defense, adopted during the communist era, was abandoned. The reform involved the creation of a new structure commanded, as in European countries, by the Minister of Interior. Civil defense units were to include law enforcement and rescue services, particularly the State Fire Service, around whose structures the entire system was to be organized. The fundamental problem in constructing the new model of civil liability insurance in Poland was the lack of a single, general legal act that would comprehensively regulate this issue. The main point of reference was the 1967 Act on the Universal Defense Obligation, a section of which was devoted to civil defense, and implementing regulations concerning the operation of state bodies. Another issue was the concept of establishing a command center for the civil defense system at the National Headquarters of the State Fire Service. The Chief Commander of the Fire Service was appointed head of the National Civil Liability Insurance[447]. In practice, the civil defense system was not used in crisis situations. This posed a serious problem when a real threat arose.

The Crisis Management Act, passed in 2007, created a national crisis response system. Despite the development of a ready-made solution, it was not implemented in the field of civil defense. Furthermore, no preparations were made for the civilian population to protect themselves in emergency situations, nor were new shelters, essential for ensuring the safety of citizens in times of war, constructed. It became clear that it was necessary to adopt entirely new legislation regulating all matters related to civil protection and civil defense. However, the process of creating the new act took a long time[448]. Initially, it seemed that provisions on civil defense would be included in the 2022 Homeland Defense Act, drafted by the then-ruling United Right cabinet. However, this did not happen. Government representatives announced that a separate act on civil protection would be created, which would regulate all issues related to civil defense. A draft bill was drafted, but it was never implemented. It stipulated that Fire Service units would become civil defense units in the event of the introduction of states of emergency: natural disasters, states of emergency, and martial law. The institution of the

[447] Wolszczak, E., 2016, *Obrona cywilna – instytucja wyparta przez rozwiązania w zakresie zarządzania kryzysowego?*, Zeszyty Naukowe 2/2016, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Akademii Sztuki Wojennej, 255-271.
[448] Kopczewski, M., Szmitkowski, P., *Obrona cywilna w Polsce – proces transformacji po 1989 roku. Stan obecny i propozycje modernizacji.,* Securitate 1/2020, Siedlce: Uniwersytet Przyrodniczo-Humanistyczny, 75-87.

Chief of National Civil Defense was abolished, but the new system was to remain based on the structures of the State Fire Service.

In 2024, the government passed a new act on civil protection and civil defense. It was signed by the president and entered into force on January 1, 2025. The act introduced changes to the earlier draft passed by the previous government. Civil liability insurance units have been expanded beyond the Fire Service to include other law enforcement and rescue services, as well as public benefit organizations. A system for financing civil defense at the central and local levels has also been established. This funding is to be a minimum of 0.3% of GDP, financed from the budgets of the Ministry of Interior and Administration and voivodes. The Minister of Interior, supported by the Government Population Protection Team composed of advisors and experts, will be responsible for civil defense in the country[449]. According to some experts, this act is insufficient to effectively establish a civil liability insurance system in Poland. First and foremost, no new central government body was introduced that would be responsible for practical civil defense; only the position of the Head of the Civil Defense Office was abolished. The Ministry of Interior and Administration remains primarily responsible for protecting the population and civil liability insurance. Another issue raised is the lack of linkage between the new act and the existing and operational crisis management system[450]. The overlap of two similar legal acts could cause confusion. Delegating some civil defense authority to local government units is also dangerous. Some local authorities lack sufficient resources to effectively perform their tasks in a crisis situation[451]. The process of ensuring the safety of citizens is extremely complex, which is why some experts have even called for the establishment of a dedicated public body responsible for population protection and civil defense. The act also lacks a plan for organizing the widespread construction of shelters, of which there are few in Poland, as they have been discontinued. Only thresholds for the competent civil liability insurance body to ensure adequate protection for citizens are defined:

[449] Pachecki, K., 2024, *Czy to najgorsza ustawa o obronie cywilnej w historii? Wątpliwości wobec niej są poważne*. Dostępne pod adresem: https://klubjagiellonski.pl/2024/10/25/ najgorsza-ustawa-o-obronie-cywilnej-w-historii-watpliwosci-sa-powazne/ [dostęp: 15 grudnia 2024].

[450] Wójcicka, K., 2024, *Ustawa nie powinna być przyjmowana w pośpiechu* – wywiad z dr Franciszkiem Krynojewskim. Dostępne pod adresem: https://www.gazetaprawna.pl/wiadomosci/kraj/artykuly/9609348,ustawa-nie-powinna-byc-przyjmowana-w-pospiechu-wywiad.html [dostęp: 2 września 2025].

[451] Kwaśniak, G., 2025, Rządowy model obrony cywilnej jest podwójną fikcją. Dostępne pod adresem: https://nowinynyskie.com.pl/artykul/rzadowy-model-obrony-n1663299 [dostęp: 2 września 2025]

25% for urban areas and 15% for rural areas. An analysis of the civil defense system in Poland and a comparison with systems in other countries led to the following conclusions:

• Civil defense in Poland requires more comprehensive changes than those introduced in the new act of December 5, 2024; however, the adoption of this act opens the opportunity for further reforms in the process of ensuring the safety of citizens;

• Work should be undertaken to unify the civil defense system with the crisis management system that has been in operation in Poland since 2007; In light of the numerous threats the Polish state has recently faced in its security environment, such as the war in Ukraine and the floods in Lower Silesia and the Opole Voivodeship in September 2024;

• adopting a law on the civil defense system, which would effectively merge the crisis management system with the civil liability insurance system;

• creating a single security system for crisis management and civil defense;

• to effectively manage the civil liability insurance system, it is worthwhile to establish a public body dedicated solely to civil protection and civil defense; this may be advocated by some experts at the Ministry of Civil Protection;

• organizing and planning activities aimed at improving public awareness of civil defense;

• synchronizing the activities of the Territorial Defense Force and the Civil Defense Force during natural disasters, as the Territorial Defense Force has, in practice, performed numerous anti-crisis measures and ensured the safety of citizens by protecting them from threats and performing tasks related to civil protection and civil defense. Furthermore, the Territorial Defense Force has the appropriate resources and resources to accomplish this. The role of the Territorial Defence Force (WOT) as a civil defence unit would be:

• to combat all threats and prevent their occurrence;

• to organize civil defence in local communities and conduct training and exercises to prepare citizens for threats;

• to organize local structures of civil defence units in the field;

Another important issue is the creation of a comprehensive program for building protective infrastructure for citizens. To this end, a separate legal act in the form of a law would be necessary, which would include:

• criteria for defining structures as protective infrastructure;

• methods of financing the creation of new sites for protecting the population in the event of a threat;

• imposing an obligation on private entities responsible for building and preparing infrastructure to perform protective functions[452].

6.9. The State's Crisis Response Capability

The crisis management system in Poland is based on the Crisis Management Act.[453] and has a hierarchical structure: from the national level (Council of Ministers, Government Security Center), through the voivodeship (voivode), district (starosta), and finally the municipal level (wójt, mayor, city president). Local governments provide the foundation for practical response and protection of residents at the local level. In Poland, after the political changes introduced in 1989, there were no regulations directly addressing the crisis management system. In this regard, the state operated based on the solutions adopted in the previous system. At that time, there were no formalized systems that would allow for professional coordination of the administrative activities, as well as all units comprising various rescue structures. Only after the flood in 1997 did the lack of coordination among rescue services and the lack of a specific crisis management process become apparent. The occurrence of a natural disaster necessitated legislative action in the field of crisis management. For many years, efforts were made to establish a crisis response system, and attempts were made to adopt normative acts appropriate to the emerging needs. Finally, in April 2007, the Crisis Management Act was passed, the main goal of which was to create a crisis management system[454].

[452] A. Rotfeld, *Polska w niepewnym świecie, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych*, Warszawa 2006, s. 28.
[453] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).
[454] T. Hoffmann, Ewolucja polskiego systemu zarządzania kryzysowego, [w:] Zarządzanie kryzysowe w systemie bezpieczeństwa narodowego, G. Sobolewski, D. Majchrzak (red.), Warszawa 2011, s. 55–56.

One of the most important elements of state security (and therefore public administration) is the ability to effectively counteract threats. Security management, which is the foundation of crisis management, is one of the most crucial state actions aimed at ensuring its existence and development in the changing conditions of the security environment. A system capable of responding to and addressing the effects of such events is called a crisis management system or a crisis management system. Such a system must be flexible and provide the ability to identify and analyze new threats that have not been previously defined[455]. Authorities play a fundamental role in ensuring security due to their formal mandate to establish laws, manage the state, monitor compliance with legal rules and enforce state coercion in relation to all entities of the political system[456].

Effective cooperation between the national, ministerial, provincial, and local government levels is crucial to ensuring the desired level of security, as they play a key role in the event of a crisis. It can be assumed that all levels of government and local government administration have prepared resources and capabilities that can be used in crisis management. The crisis management structure in this case has been designed to ensure efficient operation and the ability to respond to emergencies. It should be emphasized that the main area of operation of the national security management subsystem is crisis management. According to Article 2 of the Crisis Management Act, […] crisis management is the activity of public administration bodies as part of national security management, which involves preventing crisis situations, preparing to take control of them through planned actions, responding to crisis situations, and restoring infrastructure or its original condition[457]. The subsequent articles of the Act designate the authorities responsible for crisis management and define their tasks and responsibilities. The crisis management system in Poland is described as multi-level and consists of the following components: • crisis management authorities, • consultative and advisory bodies responsible for initiating and coordinating crisis management actions, • crisis management centers maintaining 24-hour readiness to take action[458].

[455] A. Kurkiewicz Zarządzanie sytuacjami kryzysowymi w polskim systemie prawnym, [w:] Zarządzanie kryzysowe w Polsce, pod red. M. Jabłonowski, L. Smolak, Akademia Humanistyczna w Pułtusku, Pułtusk 2007, s. 151.

[456] W. Kitler Zarządzanie kryzysowe jako element zarządzania bezpieczeństwem narodowym, [w:] System reagowania kryzysowego, pod red. J. Gryz, W. Kitler, Wydawnictwo A. Marszałek, Toruń 2001, s. 43.

457 Obwieszczenie Marszałka Sejmu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej z dnia 8 października 2020 r. w sprawie ogłoszenia jednolitego tekstu ustawy o zarządzaniu kryzysowym, Dz.U.2020.1856

458 W. Walczak, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe − rola i zadania organów administracji państwowej*, Przedsiębiorczość i zarządzanie, t. X , Z. 8, Łódź 2009, ss. 98-99.

Table 4. Crisis Management System in Poland

SYSTEM ZARZĄDZANIA KRYZYSOWEGO			
Szczebel administra-cyjny	**Organy zarządzania kryzysowego**	**Organy opiniodawczo doradcze**	**Centra Zarządzania Kryzysowego**
Krajowy	Rada Ministrów, Prezes Rady Ministrów	Rządowy Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Rządowe Centrum Bezpieczeństwa
Resortowy	Minister kierujący działem administracji rządowej, Kierownik organu centralnego	Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego (ministerstwa, urzędu centralnego)	Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego (ministerstwa, urzędu centralnego)
Wojewódzki	Wojewoda	Wojewódzki Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Wojewódzkie Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego
Powiatowy	Starosta powiatu	Powiatowy Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Powiatowe Centrum Zarządzania Kryzysowego
Gminny	Wójt, Burmistrz, Prezydent miasta	Gminny Zespół Zarządzania Kryzysowego	Mogą być tworzone (nie ma obowiązku utworzenia) gminne (miejskie) centra zarządzania kryzysowego

źródło: Rządowe Centrum Bezpieczeństwa, https://www.gov.pl/web/rcb, data dostępu 01.04.2021.

The functioning of the Government Security Centre is the most important element of the management subsystem. The Government Security Centre is responsible for providing the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers, and the Government Crisis Management Team with the necessary support in the decision-making process regarding broadly understood security by providing substantive studies and analyses obtained through continuous monitoring of the situation in the country[459]. The aim, mission and main task of the Government Security Centre is also to carry out a full analysis of threats based on data from all possible "crisis centers" operating within the public administration and on the basis of information obtained from international partners[460]. Full cooperation between authorities and coordination of activities enable the RCB to develop optimal solutions to emerging crisis situations. A key role of the RCB is to coordinate the flow of information about threats[461]. The position and importance of the GCB in the management subsystem is underpinned by its effectiveness, based on the possession, processing, and, above all, effective use of information, which forms the basis for effective crisis management activities and ensures the state's defense readiness. The GCB's role in "civil planning" is also crucial for the functioning of society, resulting in the

459 G. Pietrek, M. Stefański, *Wyzwania bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego*, Gdańsk 2018, ss. 38-39.
460 J. Zych, *Organizacje bezpieczeństwa publicznego wobec wyzwań zarządzania kryzysowego w Polsce*, Warszawa 2020, ss. 43-44.
461 Rozporządzenie Prezesa Rady Ministrów z dnia 10 lipca 2008 r. w sprawie organizacji i trybu działania Rządowego Centrum Bezpieczeństwa, Dz. U. z dnia 18 lipca 2008 r.

collection of information on the forces and resources necessary to counteract and mitigate the effects of threats. This function has a real impact on the process of preparing public administration bodies for crisis management[462].

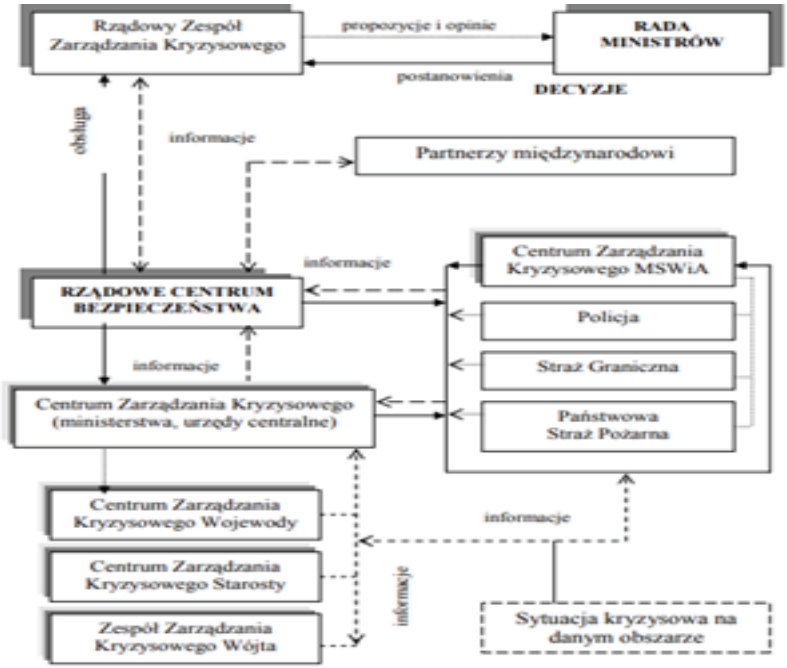


Fig. 7. *Communication diagram between crisis management structures and bodies source:https*://depot.ceon.pl/bitstream/handle/123456789/9498/Zarz%20dzanie%20kryzysowe%20%20rola%20i%20zadania%20organów%20administracji%20pa%20stwowej.pdf?sequence=1, accessed April 1, 2021.

In the event of a crisis, public administration tasks should be carried out in accordance

with the fundamental principles of crisis management in the state. These principles include:

• The principle of territorial primacy – this recognizes the territorial structure of the state as the basic structure of this model and reduces the sectoral structure (national, ministerial, provincial, district, and municipal levels) to a subsidiary function;

• Single-person management – decisions are made and accounted for by a single person (prime minister, minister, provincial governor, district head, mayor, mayor);

462 W. Otwinowski, *Kryzys i sytuacja kryzysowa*, Przegląd Naukowo-Metodyczny, Edukacja dla Bezpieczeństwa nr 2, Poznań 2010, s.88.

• The principle of public authority responsibility – authorities assume the authority and responsibility for decision-making in crisis situations;
• The principle of unification – granting administrative authorities general authority to ensure the fulfillment of their responsibilities;
• The principle of threat categorization – this involves dividing threats into groups by type and size and assigning them specific legal, organizational, and financial solutions; • Principle of universality - crisis management is organized by public authorities in cooperation with existing specialized institutions and organizations, as well as the general public[463].
At the government level, in accordance with Article 7 of the Act[464], in the territory of the Republic of Poland, crisis management is exercised by the Council of Ministers.

If a response to an incident requires immediate action, crisis management is exercised by the Minister of Interior and Administration, who immediately notifies the Prime Minister of his actions, and his decisions are considered at the next meeting of the Council of Ministers. Article 8 of the Crisis Management Act states that at the government level, the Government Crisis Management Team shall act as an advisory and consultative body responsible for initiating and coordinating such actions. The tasks and functioning of this team are regulated by the Regulations of the Prime Minister on the organization and work procedures of the Government Crisis Management Team. The team consists of:
• the Prime Minister - the chairman;
• the Minister of National Defense and the minister responsible for internal affairs - the deputy chairman;
• the Minister of Foreign Affairs;
• the Minister Coordinator of Special Services - if appointed. The regulations indicated above stipulate that meetings of this Team are convened quarterly. These are typically regular meetings, and if necessary, extraordinary meetings. Such meetings are convened by the Chairperson, or in their absence, by one of their designated deputies or by a member of the Team whose responsibility, resulting from their management of a given government administration department, is the type of crisis situation. The Chairperson notifies the bodies invited to participate in the meeting no later than seven days before the scheduled regular meeting, or no later than 24 hours before the scheduled extraordinary meeting. It is also specified that meetings are held at the Government Security Center, unless the convener

463 J. Bagiński, Nowe zarządzanie kryzysowe w praktyce, Poznań 2008, s. 9.
464 Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

designates another location. The Chairperson has the authority to invite other bodies to the meeting, as needed and taking into account the type of crisis situation[465].

The President of the Republic of Poland may appoint the Head of the National Security Bureau or another representative to the Team, as a member. Meetings may be held openly or closed. The Government Crisis Management Team's primary responsibilities include:

• preparing proposals for the use of forces and resources necessary to manage crisis situations;

• advising on the coordination of actions by government administration bodies, state institutions, and services in crisis situations;

• reviewing final reports on actions taken in connection with crisis management;

It is important to note that the RZZK's services and 24/7 information flow for the Team are provided by the Government Security Center (serving as the national crisis management center), whose director is also the RZZK's secretary. His responsibilities in this regard include:

• organizing Team meetings;

• ensuring the preparation of opinions, expert opinions, and draft documents necessary to carry out the Team's tasks;

• ensuring the exchange of information related to the Team's tasks; • cooperation with the Government Press Spokesperson regarding the preparation of draft press releases from the Team's meetings, with content agreed upon with the Team's Chair.

It should also be noted that minutes and a press release are prepared from these meetings, providing information, in particular, on the subject of the meeting and the decisions made. If a Team meeting is ordered to be closed, no press release is issued. The press release is prepared and submitted to the Government Press Spokesperson by the Team's secretary, who then publicly announces the release. The Crisis Management Act led to the establishment of the Government Security Centre[466]. The Center provides crisis management support to the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister, the Team, and the minister responsible for internal affairs, and serves as the national crisis management center. The Act specifies that the Center's responsibilities include:

• civil emergency planning (including: presenting detailed methods and means for responding to threats and mitigating their effects; developing and updating the National Crisis Management Plan, in cooperation with the relevant organizational units of offices serving ministers and heads

[465] Zarządzenie Nr 86 Prezesa Rady Ministrów z dnia 14 sierpnia 2008 r. w sprawie organizacji i trybu pracy Rządowego Zespołu Zarządzania Kryzysowego (M.P. z 2008 r. Nr 61, poz. 538).
[466] Ustawa z dnia 26 kwietnia o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2026.574).

of central offices; analyzing and assessing the potential occurrence and development of threats; collecting information on threats and analyzing collected materials;

• developing conclusions and proposals for preventing and counteracting threats;

• planning the use of the Polish Armed Forces to perform tasks;

• planning support by public administration bodies for the implementation of the tasks of the Polish Armed Forces);

• monitoring potential threats;

• coordinating crisis management plans prepared by ministers heading government administration departments and heads of central offices; • preparing the activation of crisis management procedures in the event of threats; • preparing draft opinions and positions of the Government Crisis Management Team; • cooperating with entities, units, and organizational units of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the European Union, as well as other international organizations responsible for crisis management and critical infrastructure protection; • organizing, conducting, and coordinating crisis management training and exercises, and participating in national and international exercises; • ensuring the flow of information between domestic and foreign crisis management bodies and structures;

• carrying out permanent duty tasks as part of the state's defense preparedness; • carrying out tasks related to the prevention, counteraction, and removal of the effects of terrorist incidents;

• cooperating with the Head of the Internal Security Agency in the prevention, counteraction, and removal of the effects of terrorist incidents; • Implementation of planning and programming tasks related to critical infrastructure protection, including the development and updating of the functional annex to the National Crisis Management Plan regarding critical infrastructure protection, as well as cooperation, as the national contact point, with institutions of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and their member states regarding critical infrastructure protection;

• Cooperation with crisis management centers of public administration bodies.

It is worth noting that the Council of Ministers or the Prime Minister may assign the Center additional tasks related to crisis management[467].

One of the key responsibilities of a state governed by the rule of law is ensuring the safety of its citizens. In highly developed societies characterized by a high level of organization, the population is often able to function effectively in extreme situations. However, the responsibilities of public administration bodies are crucial here, as they are obligated to create

[467] http://www.rcb.gov.pl/

and implement appropriate solutions. This is crucial primarily for effective crisis management[468]. It's easy to spot apparent discrepancies in legal acts relating to crisis management. Crisis activity affects health and life, as well as the environment, property, and infrastructure, resulting in a large number of legal acts. All of them can become the legal basis for crisis management. Article 5 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland states that the Republic of Poland safeguards the independence and inviolability of its territory, ensures freedom and observance of human and civil rights. The state is also obligated, under the Constitution, to ensure the safety of its citizens and to protect the national heritage and the environment, while adhering to the principles of sustainable development. However, the primary responsibility of the state is to ensure the safety of its citizens – this provision should be considered paramount, serving as the foundation for all legal acts relating to crisis management[469].

According to Article 38 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, the state ensures legal protection of life for every person. This provision also applies to the crisis management process, which aims to protect life by planning and implementing rescue operations in the event of natural disasters, catastrophes, and other events posing a threat to the health or life of citizens. Chapter XI of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland is devoted to states of emergency, which are introduced in situations of particular danger. Poland distinguishes three states of emergency: a state of emergency, a state of natural disaster, and martial law. A state of emergency can only be introduced by an act or regulation, which must be publicly announced. Actions taken under the declaration of a state of emergency must be proportionate to the level of threat. They should also aim to restore the normal functioning of the state as quickly as possible.

From the perspective of crisis management, Articles 230 and 232 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland are crucial. The first of these states that a state of emergency may be introduced by the President at the request of the Council of Ministers. This may occur in the event of a threat to the constitutional system of the state, the security of citizens, or public order. A state of emergency may be declared throughout the entire territory of the country or in its individual regions for a period of no longer than 90 days. This state may be extended only once, upon the Senate's request, and for a period of no longer than 60 days. Article 232 focuses

[468] A. Bucka, *Podstawy prawne zarządzania kryzysowego w Polsce, [w:] Zarządzanie kryzysowe i działania logistyczne na przykładzie wybranych instytucji*, T. Pokusa, W. Duczmal (red.), Opole 2009.
[469] B. Wiśniewski, B. Kaczmarczyk, *Zarządzanie kryzysowe, Uwarunkowania teoretyczne, prawne i organizacyjne* t:1, , (red.), Legnica 2012.

on the provisions relating to the introduction of a state of natural disaster, which may be declared to prevent the effects of natural disasters or technical failures that have the characteristics of a natural disaster, as well as to eliminate their effects. A state of natural disaster is declared by the Council of Ministers for a period of no longer than 30 days throughout the entire territory of the country or part of it. An extension of this state is possible with the consent of the Sejm. Another legal act relating to crisis management is the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland[470], it contains strategic models for internal and external state security. The National Security Strategy is addressed to all public administration bodies, as well as other entities that carry out security tasks in any way. Importantly, the strategy's goals are consistent not only with the Polish Constitution but also with NATO's Strategic Concept and the European Security Strategy. It is assumed that the state's security system is intended to ensure internal, social, and military security, as well as economic and ecological security. The 2020 National Security Strategy provides the basis for building strategies in many areas of state security. Other important legal acts regulating crisis management include the 2007 Crisis Management Act and the 2009 Act Amending the 2009 Crisis Management ActI[471]. They establish the responsibilities and roles of authorities in crisis management matters, as well as define the principles of their operation. They also address the issue of financing tasks arising from crisis management.

While mentioning the aforementioned acts as the main legal acts relating to crisis management, it is also worth mentioning the regulations issued on their basis, which serve as implementing acts. One such document is the Regulation of the Council of Ministers of 30 April 2010 on the Report on Threats to National Security[472], this is an implementing act of Article 5a, Section 6 of the Crisis Management Act, specifying the procedure, method, and deadlines for preparing this report. The report forms the basis for preparing the National Crisis Management Plan and the crisis management plans of ministerial units, central management offices, voivodes, district heads, and mayors (city presidents, mayors).

With the development of civilization and the advancement of globalization, it is easy to observe the growing number of new threats, of diverse nature and unusual sources. At the same time, humanity has increased its chances of combating emerging threats – both in terms of predicting them and mitigating their effects. However, this does not solve the problem

[470] Strategia Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Warszawa 2020.
[471] Ustawa z dnia 17 lipca 2009 r. o zmianie ustawy o zarządzaniu kryzysowym (Dz. U. 2009 nr 131 poz. 1076 z późn. zm.).
[472] Rozporządzenie Rady Ministrów z dnia 30 kwietnia 2010 r. w sprawie Raportu o zagrożeniach bezpieczeństwa narodowego (Dz. U. 2010 nr 83 poz. 540).

of their occurrence, as not all threats can be predicted. In the Dictionary of National Security Terms, the concept of threat is described as "a situation in which there is a probability of a dangerous state occurring to the environment"[473]. Considering the functioning of the state, threats can be divided into social, military, economic, and ecological. A general threat analysis also allows for the identification of two main categories of threats: natural and ecological, and civilizational threats, resulting from human activity and technical failures[474]. Ecological threats include biological, atmospheric, geological, and ecosystem hazards. Despite the identification and study of natural hazards, their destructive power often leaves both human knowledge and advanced technology powerless to combat them. Among the most common natural hazards are atmospheric hazards, which are related not only to natural phenomena but also to excessive human interference with the environment. These include heavy precipitation (rain, hail, snow), floods, avalanches, extreme temperatures, strong winds (tornadoes, hurricanes, tornadoes), storms, and lightning[475]. Floods are considered the most common threat in Poland, with their devastating impact on both the environment and human life and health. According to the 2017 Water Law Act[476] (article 16, paragraph 43) A flood is a temporary covering of land by water, resulting from the accumulation of large amounts of water in natural streams, canals, or reservoirs. Floods are classified according to:

• scope: local (mainly affecting small catchments), regional (usually affecting only one hydrographic region),

• national (occurring in several hydrographic regions);

• magnitude: large, medium, small;

• timing: spring, summer, autumn, winter; mode of occurrence:

• natural and caused by anthropological factors (improper water management, human-induced emergencies).

Floods are classified as natural disasters. Their characteristic feature is their large-scale occurrence, posing a threat to human health and life. Floods often necessitate evacuations and lead to insect and rodent infestations, which can consequently trigger a national epidemiological crisis. Furthermore, floods cause significant damage to infrastructure, farms, and buildings, which in turn can lead to disruptions in the functioning of the state (closure of schools, public administration facilities, hospitals, etc.). Another climatic threat is precipitation, which includes

[473] Zagrożenie, [w:] Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego, op. cit., s. 162.
[474] R. Socha, Współczesne postrzeganie zagrożeń, [w:] Zarządzanie kryzysowe. Teoria, praktyka, konteksty, badania, J. Stawicka, B. Wiśniewski, R. Socha (red.), op. cit., s. 29.
[475] A. Żebrowski, Zarządzanie…, op. cit., s. 71.
[476] Ustawa z dnia 20 lipca 2017 r. – Prawo wodne (Dz. U. 2017 poz. 1566).

drizzle, rain, snow, and hail[477]. Rain and snowfall are common phenomena, but when excessively intense, they lead to disruptions in social life and problems with the functioning of the state.

Heavy snowfall at sub-zero temperatures can also cause difficulties. They have often led to serious shortages in gas, water, and electricity supplies. Heavy snowfall also contributes to the formation of snowdrifts, impeding communication and transportation. They can damage telecommunications lines or electricity transmission lines. Snow accumulation on building roofs is also dangerous, a clear example of which was the 2006 market hall disaster in Chorzów.

Avalanches also pose a serious crisis threat. In Poland, snow avalanches are the most common, although mudslides also occur naturally. Snow avalanches are the result of heavy rainfall and simultaneous snow accumulation in the mountains. In addition to heavy snowfall, the following factors influence the formation of avalanches: the type of ground, snow structure, slope angle, strong wind, strong acoustic signals, sunlight, as well as the presence of people and animals[478]. Snow avalanches pose a serious threat to people, the natural environment, and tourist infrastructure. Landslides, mudslides, and mud-debris flows resulting from prolonged and heavy rainfall can be equally tragic.

Another type of atmospheric hazard is extreme temperatures, both above and below zero. Severe frosts contribute to the freezing of vegetation (which can lead to serious agricultural losses) and also pose a threat to human health and life. During winter, hypothermia is a common cause, and in extreme cases, death. Severe frost also disrupts communication and public transport. It often causes breakdowns in heating, water, sewage, and power networks[479].

High temperatures also pose a threat to human health and life. In Poland, the highest temperatures occur between July and August. Temperatures above 30 degrees Celsius (30 degrees Fahrenheit) for at least three days can cause symptoms of sunstroke, resulting in permanent brain damage or even death. Agricultural crops can also be seriously damaged by excessive heat. Extremely high temperatures and drought also contribute to an increased risk of forest fires. Wildfires pose a serious threat to both human safety and property, as well as to the natural environment. They are a process of spontaneous and uncontrolled fire spread, which

[477] E. Nowak, Zarządzanie kryzysowe w sytuacjach zagrożeń niemilitarnych, Warszawa 2007, s. 24.
[478] Rządowe Centrum Bezpieczeństwa, Zagrożenia okresowe występujące w Polsce. Aktualizacja, Warszawa, styczeń 2013, http://rcb.gov.pl/wp-content/uploads/RCB- Zagro%C5%BCenia-okresowe-w-Polsce-aktualizacja.pdf (dostęp: 5.05.2018).
[479] G. Sobolewski, *Zagrożenia kryzysowe*, Warszawa 2011, s. 36.

ultimately leads to significant losses[480]. Fire hazards are caused by the increasing number of devices that can cause fires and flammable materials. Although we now have increasingly modern fire extinguishing equipment and fire protection systems, it is still impossible to completely control the fire. Fires are classified based on two categories: the size of the phenomenon and its source. In terms of size, fires can be small, medium, large, and very large. Fire sources can be natural or caused by human activity. In the case of natural fires, spontaneous combustion occurs, most often caused by drought after prolonged high temperatures. Fires caused by storms also fall into this category. Human-caused fires include intentional arson, accidental fire spread, short circuits, fires caused by faulty electrical installations, and fires resulting from traffic accidents[481]. In accordance with the Fire Protection Act[482] (Article 15) The State Fire Service is responsible for protection in this area.

Threats arising from human activity and technical failures are often the result of human recklessness, lack of appropriate safeguards, and failure to comply with basic safety regulations. These threats include, among others, fires resulting from human activity, construction and transport disasters, industrial plant failures, criminal and terrorist activities, and armed conflicts between states. A particular source of threats, particularly conducive to terrorist activity, are public gatherings.

Construction disasters, as defined by the law (Construction Law) (Article 3), are the unintentional and violent destruction of a building or any part thereof, as well as structural components of scaffolding, forming equipment, sheet piles, and excavation support[483]. The causes of construction disasters include:

- excessive use of the building;
- errors in the construction of the building;
- errors in the building design;
- excessive use of the building;
- other random events[484].

In the event of a structural disaster, the most important element of rescue operations is always saving lives and health, as well as securing the structure from the potential worsening of the disaster's effects. A significant portion of threats stems from transport disasters involving

[480] F.R. Krynojewski, S. Mazur, *Podstawy wiedzy o zarządzaniu*, [w:] F.R. Krynojewski, S. Mazur, G. Mikrut, P. Tchorzewski, Zarządzanie kryzysowe, obrona cywilna kraju,ochrona informacji niejawnych, Katowice 2003, s. 66.
[481] G. Sobolewski, Zagrożenia kryzysowe, op. cit., s. 60.
[482] Ustawa z dnia 24 sierpnia 1991 r. o ochronie przeciwpożarowej (Dz. U. 1991 nr 81 poz. 351 z późn. zm.)
[483] Ustawa z dnia 7 lipca 1994 r. – Prawo budowlane (Dz. U. 1994 nr 89 poz. 414 z późn. zm.).
[484] G. Sobolewski, Zagrożenia kryzysowe, s. 70.

road, rail, and air transport. The majority of disasters involve road transport. Numerous road accidents occur each year, resulting in deaths and injuries. Despite its high safety standards, rail transport is declining in popularity. Air transport is the safest mode of transport. Excessive speed, driving inappropriately for traffic conditions, failure to comply with traffic regulations, carelessness while driving, and unfavorable weather conditions are considered the main causes of transport disasters.

A gathering of people (religious, public, mass events, crowds, and gatherings) is not a threat in itself, but it constitutes a significant source of threats to public safety and order due to the large number of people present in the same place at the same time. One of the fundamental human rights in democratic states is the freedom of assembly, provided that such assembly is peaceful. Gatherings of people of a different nature (for example, a group of football hooligans vandalizing a city) are not considered as assemblies, but rather as gatherings, often dangerous in nature. Individuals possessing explosives, weapons, or other tools commonly considered dangerous are prohibited from participating in assemblies. Individuals whose appearance makes it difficult to identify them are also prohibited. Gatherings of people can become a target for terrorists, as they are characterized by a potentially large number of victims. Furthermore, the media presence at mass events can be an incentive for terrorists, providing the opportunity to quickly gain publicity or even carry out an attack in front of thousands of spectators. Mass sporting, artistic, or entertainment events often pose a threat to public order (fights, conflicts), and therefore require additional intervention by law enforcement agencies.

Organized crime is widely considered a threat to national security. It occurs worldwide and affects various areas of socio-economic life. In Poland, this phenomenon intensified shortly after the opening of borders in 1989. Organized crime is fueled by the constant flow of services, goods, and people across borders. Criminal activity is most often based on the trade in weapons, explosives, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, medicines, and stolen cars, as well as the illegal production of these goods. This also leads to the trade in narcotics, economic crimes, human trafficking, smuggling, illegal gambling, terrorism, and so on. Organized crime is primarily based on intimidation, assaults, murders, blackmail, extortion, theft, robberies, corruption, robberies, kidnappings, and acts of terror. Through criminal ties to the authorities and corruption, criminal organizations facilitate their illegal activities, which negatively impact the country's internal security. For example, drug production and trade contribute to drug addiction, while human trafficking is a blatant violation of human rights. The arms trade, in turn,

contributes to armed conflicts, and cigarette and alcohol smuggling deprives the state budget of a significant portion of revenue.

Terrorism, combining both military and non-military elements, is considered the greatest threat posed by intentional human activity in the 21st century. Terrorist activities include increasingly widespread suicide bombings, the use of weapons of mass destruction, and the kidnapping and detention of people. When developing their security policies, states should consider the increasingly rapid spread of terrorism, which primarily targets large, populated areas. Terrorists seek to incite panic in society and thus influence individuals and state decision-making bodies. It is assumed that, for terrorists, violence is a way to communicate their ideologies to a wider audience[485].

Cyberterrorism is considered a form of terrorism that is becoming an increasingly significant threat in the age of information and communication technologies. It results in a serious breach of economic, political, and military security. For terrorists, the internet serves as a tool for operational reconnaissance and a valuable source of information about a given country's critical infrastructure. Information obtained this way helps plan and execute a terrorist attack[486]. Observing global events, one can see that the threat of military action still plays a significant role. The main causes of military conflicts are economic, political, military, ethnic, religious, social, and ecological factors[487]. Military threats may take the form of armed actions, military coups, military blockades, armed interventions, military blackmail, local conflicts, military clashes, etc.[488]. They pose a threat to states, ethnic and religious groups, etc., but above all, to people's lives and health.

CONCLUSIONS

Citizen safety should be the highest value for all governments in democratic countries. Maintaining it, although sometimes difficult in crisis situations, should be the focal point of all states' actions. It is impossible to be a state governed by the rule of law without proper care for its citizens. To achieve this, however, it is necessary to create legal acts that will implement measures to protect and secure the health and lives of citizens in times of potential crisis. Considering Polish legal acts and existing procedures for responding to crises, it can be concluded that the Republic of Poland is adequately prepared for such threats, which

[485] K. Kozłowski, Terroryzm jako zagrożenie państwa, [w:] Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne państwa. Wybrane zagadnienia, S. Sulowski, M. Brzeziński (red.), Warszawa 2009, s. 301.
[486] P. Gawliczek, J. Pawłowski, Zagrożenia asymetryczne, Warszawa 2003, s. 49.
[487] S. Dworecki, Od konfliktu do wojny, Warszawa 1996, s. 58.
[488] *Ibidem*, s. 71

is primarily due to the legal provisions enacted after the 1997 flood. Constitutional, statutory, and regulatory provisions allow us to assume that our country is adequately prepared for crisis situations. Poland has already demonstrated this repeatedly during the violent weather phenomena that periodically recur across our country. The ever-increasing threats, particularly those related to terrorism and cybercrime, require constant updates to the legal framework governing their response. Only in this way can crisis management effectively implement national security tasks.

It is imperative to emphasize that to ensure not only the capacity but also the effectiveness of crisis response, the crisis management system, from the municipal to the national level, must be based on effective cooperation and a coherent multi-level structure, as well as coordinated actions by central and local governments, and emergency services such as the State Fire Service. The strengths of the crisis management system include:

• High efficiency of operational services: The State Fire Service and the Police are characterized by high operational speed and professionalism in the field.

• Advanced monitoring and alerting: The Government Center for Security (RCB) system efficiently sends mass SMS notifications (RCB Alerts) to citizens in at-risk regions.

• Civil-military cooperation: The ability to quickly engage the Polish Armed Forces to support civilians (e.g., during floods or natural disasters). However, in terms of challenges and weaknesses, the crisis management system has serious limitations at the local level. Some local governments struggle with insufficient funding and deficiencies in reserve planning, and therefore these elements should be refined. Furthermore, there are serious shortcomings in civil protection and procedures related to the resilience of critical infrastructure, solutions related to, for example, water and food supplies in the event of a threat, and the condition of protective structures, including a lack of a sufficient number of shelters.

The constantly changing security environment, and above all the constantly evolving catalogue of threats to modern states and societies, forces entities responsible for an appropriate level of security to take action to effectively respond to crisis situations. New conflicts, recurring terrorist attacks, new forms of warfare - asymmetric threats, biological and ecological threats - encourage the implementation of initiatives aimed at ensuring security.

Chapter VII

POLAND'S STRATEGIC CONCEPTS AND CAPABILITIES WITHIN NATO AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

7.1. Poland in the Collective Security System – A Historical Overview

Poland bases its security on NATO membership (collective defense) and cooperation with the European Union and the OSCE. The contemporary security system combines military deterrence, allied commitments (Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty), and participation in stabilization and peacekeeping missions. Adapting collective security and collective defense mechanisms to stabilize the state and strengthen its international position has been a key task of Polish policy in the last century. Poland's regaining of independence in the 20th century was a consequence of a liberal vision of the international order[489].

In the context of national security, it is worth recalling a historical outline. Poland, reborn in 1918, in the sense of having an internationally recognized right to independent existence within ethnic borders and with access to the sea, was a political derivative of Wilsonian idealism articulated at the end of World War I[490]. The resulting vision of international order, plans, and actions, however, diverged significantly in the politics of the subsequent period. Their first test was the Treaty of Versailles and the League of Nations[491]. The Versailles regulations left many issues concerning the future existence of the young Polish state unresolved (including the course of borders and guarantees of their inviolability, ethnic relations, disputes over sovereignty or access to economic infrastructure). This forced the Polish authorities to seek other forms of ensuring security. Theoretically, the League of Nations Covenant, as a guarantee of the security of member states, carried a general promise of limiting the right to war, disarmament, and peaceful resolution of conflicts, and of joint action in the face of threats or actual armed aggression. The United States withdrew from the League, and the participation of Germany and the Soviet Union was also episodic, as was the increasing marginalization of Japan. Thus, among the powers tasked with guaranteeing peace and upholding its principles, the emerging global power was permanently absent as a stabilizing

[489] M.D. Magee, The Way the World Should Be. Woodrow Wilson and the Crafting of a Faith-Based Foreign Policy, Baylor University Press, Waco 2008.
[490] R. Bierzanek, *Państwo polskie w politycznych koncepcjach mocarstw zachodnich 1917–1919*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 1964.
[491] W. Studnicki, *System polityczny Europy a Polska*, Wydawnictwo Antyk – Marcin Dybowski, Komorów 2010, s. 19–48.

force in a system of relations shaped by Poland's revisionist eastern and western neighbors. Neither Great Britain nor France were capable of fulfilling this role, as they were poorly versed in the concept of collective security and, for the sake of peace in the West, were willing to make concessions at the expense of Eastern European states. Poland, however, decided to use its forum to protect its own interests. It consistently sought a non-permanent seat on the Council the organization's decision-making structure. This was intended to guarantee a balance to Germany's position (after joining the League in 1926) and a permanent place in the organization's decision-making process. These efforts were successful in 1926, and through four re-elections, Poland maintained this status until the organization's end[492]. The balance of Polish policy in the perspective of collective security in the interwar period is worsened by its final chord, the outbreak of World War II and all its subsequent consequences. Border protection, territorial issues, defense against minority grievances, the use of the LN to de-escalate political conflicts with neighbors, and initiatives to expand and universalize norms stabilizing interstate relations create a balance of rational policy that does not shy away from using existing instruments of collective security. Participation in the organization's work also promoted the subjectivity of the Polish state and awareness of its interests among the states of the time[493].

In the political practice of the Second Polish Republic, the collective (mutual) defense mechanism was the most favored of the two multilateral security models. It was consistent with the principles of the League of Nations and was a common practice at the time. Polish authorities exercised considerable caution regarding the collective security system—partly due to its structure, limited universality, and the real policies of the great powers, which appealed to universal principles and focused on their own interests[494]. Greater hopes were placed on classic and simpler policy tools. From the Polish perspective, both the League of Nations and the alliances were intended to support the development of national defense potential, especially military, and not to restrict the independence of foreign policy. A separate question is the extent to which this was the result of a deliberate choice and strategic plan, and the extent to which it was a consequence of circumstances—Poland's geopolitical situation, its limited potential, and its influence in the international arena. Nevertheless, the focus on increasing Poland's freedom of action, neutralizing threats, and expanding military capabilities remained a constant feature

[492] A.M. Brzeziński, *Oskar Halecki a Liga Narodów. Poglądy i działalność*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego, Łódź 2016.
[493] Z.K. Cesarz, *Polska a Liga Narodów. Kwestie terytorialne w latach 1920–1925*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1993.
[494] A. Wysocki, *Tajemnice dyplomatycznego sejfu*, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1974, s. 49–50.

of Poland's interwar security policy. It can also be assumed that this was seen as an indirect path to strengthening Poland's position in the League of Nations and in the region, as well as increasing its attractiveness as a potential ally[495]. Some of the reasons for this approach to security policy were likely subjective. These included the belief, particularly among the Piłsudski camp, that Poland's independence and borders were brought not by the LN and its allies, but by its own military efforts (which naturally encouraged further strengthening of decision-making autonomy). There was also a distrust, deepening over the years, of the will and capacity to act of potential partners (including France, which remained a key ally), and finally, the fundamental assumption of Poland's foreign policy at the time, that it was necessary to maintain an "equal distance" from the USSR and Germany and prevent the two revisionist powers from becoming closer[496]. The aforementioned strategic assumption was also a consequence of objective conditions, such as: location between powers with greater potential than Poland, functioning with a sense of territorial losses suffered by Poland after World War I, or tense relations with most of its neighbors, especially due to territorial conflicts and problems with national minorities[497]. It was probably this last factor that most decisively determined that Poland did not become a permanent participant in any regional multilateral alliance during the interwar period (after the failure of Piłsudski's federation plans). The value of such a solution was, however, recognized both at home (the Intermarium concept, aimed at creating a bloc of states "between Germany and Russia/USSR," and the idea of a Baltic alliance, particularly alive during the struggle for Poland's eastern border) and abroad ("testing" the chances of Poland joining the so-called Little Entente by Romania and France)[498].

The materialization of these aspirations was precluded by the exceptionally difficult relations with Czechoslovakia, a participant in the "Little Entente," during the interwar period, as well as Lithuania (significant in the context of Intermarium), with which diplomatic relations were established under the dramatic circumstances of the Polish ultimatum only in 1938. In such an agreement, Poland, as the largest country in the region, would have had to act as a local leader, which, given its weakness and the difficult Polish-German and Polish-Soviet relations, would have been difficult. As a result, Poland was forced to rely on bilateral

[495] R. Kuźniar, *Polityka i siła. Studia strategiczne – zarys problematyki*, Scholar, Fundacja Studiów Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2005, s. 321–331
[496] M. Kornat, *Polityka równowagi 1934–1939,* Arcana, Kraków 2007.
[497] M.K. Kamiński, M.J. Zacharias, *Polityka zagraniczna Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1939*, LTW, Warszawa 1998, s. 55–90, 131.
[498] T. Kośmider, *Stosunki wojskowe w międzywojennej Europie*, w: T. Kośmider, J. Ślipiec, J. Zuziak, Europejska integracja militarna. Sojusze wojskowe XX wieku, Wydawnictwo Akademii Obrony Narodowej, Warszawa 2011, s. 57–59.

agreements. For almost the entire interwar period, this meant maintaining alliances with France and Romania[499].

The alliance with the former, initiated by the military convention of February 19, 1921 (and later modified several times), was definitely more important in the context of Polish security interests[500]. It included a commitment to mutual assistance in the event of German aggression. A close relationship with the continent's largest power (at least in the early interwar years) could offer solid security guarantees and serve as the foundation of Polish policy in this regard. In reality, however, this alliance was strongly asymmetric from the outset (resulting from differing military and economic potentials, often divergent political interests, and the two countries' distinct international positions). This allowed France to seek to make Poland dependent on its support (e.g., arms purchase agreements and the need to organize its forces along French lines, as well as military loans), while also gradually limiting the actual scope of its own obligations towards Poland. This was particularly true after the Locarno Conference and the French concepts of the so-called Eastern Pact (perceived in Warsaw as an attempt to dilute French military guarantees) and the subsequent remilitarization of the Rhineland in 1936[501].

The Polish-French alliance, important in the context of protecting Poland's eastern border against the USSR, was complemented by an alliance with Romania, established under the agreement of March 3, 1921 (modified and expanded in 1926 and 1931). However, in this case, the alliance, if only due to partially divergent interests and areas of interest (the Balkans), as well as the military and political weakness of both partners (the Romanian armed forces were poorly organized and outdated at the time), proved to be a rather useless tool, maintained in force mainly due to the lack of a real alternative[502].

It should be added that since the early 1930s, Poland, aware of the geopolitical situation, had been seeking rapprochement with Great Britain. This was one of the most important instructions left by Marshal Piłsudski to Foreign Minister Józef Beck. Immediately before the outbreak of World War II, the alliance was finally concluded on British initiative (August 25, 1939). Its primary purpose was to deter Germany from attacking Poland. However, this was no longer possible by then. The inability (and also the lack of will) of Great Britain (and its ally

[499] R. Kuźniar, *Polityka bezpieczeństwa w polskiej polityce zagranicznej*, w: idem (red.), Polska polityka bezpieczeństwa 1989–2000, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2001, s. 51–52;
[500] M.K. Kamiński, M.J. Zacharias, op. cit., zwł. s. 61–63.
[501] J. Ciałowicz, *Polsko-francuski sojusz wojskowy 1921–1939*, [s.n.], Warszawa 1939.
[502] J. Kukułka, *Traktaty sąsiedzkie Polski odrodzonej*, Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich – Wydawnictwo, Wrocław 1998, s. 48–50;

France) to effectively provide military aid to the attacked Poland underscores the emptiness of this belated political gesture as much as the excessive hope placed by Warsaw in its alliances[503]. On September 3, 1939, France and Great Britain declared war on the Third Reich, radically broadening the local context of the Polish-German conflict. However, they did not provide active military assistance to the defending Poland, and later showed no interest in introducing a Polish complaint against the Third Reich's aggression in the League of Nations.

During the interwar period, alliance mechanisms thus played a significant role in Polish security policy, although ultimately their practical significance proved limited. They were intended primarily to complement Poland's internal efforts (army expansion) and diplomatic efforts (negotiating non-aggression treaties) to protect its western and eastern borders (against Germany and the USSR, respectively – interestingly, such measures were not developed in the context of the other disputed borders). As the experience of 1939 demonstrated, no multilateral security instruments could safeguard peace and Polish independence. The partition of Poland carried out by Germany and the USSR on September 17th was evidence of the state's internal weakness across the full spectrum of its structures, and foreign and security policy were no exception. This experience, and especially the widespread sense of allied betrayal in Polish society in September 1939, later reinforced by the Yalta agreements, shaped Polish strategic thought into a distrust of allied agreements, but also a healthy reflection on the need for constant analysis of their credibility. The experience of collective security did not become deeply ingrained in the public consciousness of Poles during the Second Polish Republic. The new arrangement in this regard brought about by the United Nations after World War II could be welcomed with interest – as a promise of peace and lessons learned from the failure of the League of Nations. With the end of World War II, the country, territorially reduced and devastated by six years of war and occupation, with a reduced population, after a short transition period, became part of the Soviet sphere of domination as a result of coercion, undemocratic internal processes, and the Yalta-Potsdam Agreements. Poland was reduced to the position of a formally independent state, but in reality, unable to determine the content and direction of its own policy. The shifting of national borders (territorial gains at the expense of a divided Germany and losses in the East to the Soviet Union), without treaty guarantees of new acquisitions in the West, led to concerns about the sustainability of such arrangements. Faced with the Cold War rivalry between Moscow and Washington and the crystallization of two

[503] W. Dobrzycki, Historia stosunków międzynarodowych 1815–1945, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, FSM, Warszawa 2003, s. 469–470.

political and military blocs, Poland was becoming a frontline state. In a military sense, situated on the forefront of a possible military conflict (conventional and nuclear), it was part of the Warsaw Pact's offensive strategic plans and its important strategic base. In a political sense, its interests became, to a certain extent, hostage to the open-ended question of German reunification and the consequent territorial status quo.

Soviet protection of Polish affairs, which Moscow saw as protecting its own strategic interests and holdings in Europe, required the development of bilateral and multilateral systemic ties. These were to be complemented by agreements with the West (direct or within collective security institutions) that would sanction the post-war territorial arrangement and reduce inter-bloc tensions. This, in a sense, saw a reversal of the institutional logic in Polish security policy. Unlike during the Second Polish Republic, with the exception of the issue of sovereignty, collective security mechanisms were to be supplemented by the alliances of the Polish People's Republic, treated as the foundation of state security—understood primarily as prevention and defense against threats from the West. In this arrangement, a multilateral collective defense mechanism dominated by Moscow was to provide direct guarantees of security and the inviolability of borders. In turn, the collective security mechanism, in addition to developing principles of peaceful coexistence, reducing conflicts and armaments, and weakening transatlantic cooperation (accused of violating the UN Charter), was primarily intended to satisfy the individual and bloc interests of the USSR.

As the Polish People's Republic, Poland participated in one multilateral alliance – the Warsaw Pact (Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance), established on May 14, 1955, officially in response to the 1954 modification of the Brussels Treaty (of 1948) and the decision on rearmament and the West German accession to NATO[504]. Seemingly analogous to the Western defensive alliance, the Warsaw Pact was in fact its distorting reflection[505]. Formally, it remained a strictly defensive agreement, with no specific casus foederis (any aggression against a member state) and recognizing the primacy of UNSC arrangements in resolving international disputes. It was thus intended to provide a strong guarantee of security and defense against a potential attack by NATO member states, given the

[504] Obok Polski w chwili zawiązania uczestniczyły w nim: ZSRR, Czechosłowacja, NRD, Węgry, Bułgaria, Rumunia, Albania (do 1968 r.). Polsce przypadła techniczna rola gospodarza spotkania założycielskiego i depozytariusza tego porozumienia. Kilka dekad później w miejscu podpisania Układu Warszawskiego wolna Polska gościła szereg spotkań wysokiego szczebla już jako członek NATO.

[505] R. Kupiecki, *Siła i solidarność. Strategia NATO 1949–1989,* Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2012, s. 28–29 i 271–272.

military capabilities of the participants (primarily the USSR) and the declared nature of their obligations (obligation to consult and provide assistance, including armed assistance)[506].

However, the decision-making procedures and structure of the organization were characterized by superficiality, and the satellites' influence on planning and decisions was marginal at best. The Staff of the United Armed Forces of the University of Warsaw was established only in 1969, and their statute was adopted 10 years later—a quarter of a century after the organization's founding[507].

The Warsaw Pact turned out to be a one-dimensional military structure, where political cooperation and consultations had no practical significance, and the armed forces of its members were operationally subordinated directly to the command of the Soviet Army.[508]. In light of its own plans, it constituted an offensive agreement, intended to utilize the potential of satellite states in the event of a conflict with NATO. Participation in the Warsaw Pact was also simply costly for smaller allies, also due to maintaining Soviet bases on their territory[509]. The status of the Treaty's nominal second military force[510] did not change the situation of Poland, dependent on the USSR and deprived of a voice[511] to the same extent as the other participants. However, it sometimes allowed for the role of representative in external relations, for example, in international conciliation commissions or peacekeeping forces – operating under the auspices of the UN and in the collective security space.

The Warsaw Pact was also an instrument for maintaining the political and ideological unity of the bloc, which, in the event of a deviation from Moscow's current line or an internal threat to the stability of the local communist party's rule, risked fraternal assistance from the allies. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the only joint military operation conducted by the Warsaw Pact countries (excluding Romania) was the so-called Operation Danube: an intervention in Czechoslovakia in 1968, aimed at maintaining the unity of the bloc[512]. Soviet military interventions also took place in East Germany and Hungary, and their threat loomed over Poland during the October thaw of 1956 and in 1981.

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[506] J.M. Nowak, *Od hegemonii do agonii. Upadek Układu Warszawskiego – polska perspektywa*, Bellona, Warszawa 2011, s. 32.
[507] R. Kałużny, *Układ Warszawski 1955–1991*, „Zeszyty Naukowe WSOWL" 2008, nr 1, s. 190–191.
[508] R. Kupiecki, Siła i solidarność…, op. cit., s. 28–29.
[509] V. Mastny, M. Byrne (red.), A Cardboard Castle? *An Inside History of the Warsaw Pact 1955–1991*, Central European University Press, Budapest–New York 2005.
[510] R. Kupiecki, *NATO wobec wydarzeń Października 1956 roku w Polsce*, w: J. Rowiński (red.), *Polski Październik 1956 w polityce światowej*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2006, s. 278.
[511] A. Paczkowski, *Wojsko Polskie w Układzie Warszawskim. Od marzeń o polskim froncie do rzeczywistości stanu wojennego*, „Zeszyty Historyczne" 2007, nr 161, s. 146–162.
[512] L. Pajórek, *Polska a Praska Wiosna, „Egros",* Wojskowy Instytut Historyczny AON, Warszawa 1998.

With Moscow's explicit support, concluding bilateral agreements was a common practice among communist bloc countries[513]. Some Polish documents, especially the friendship treaties with the USSR and Czechoslovakia (and the so-called Zgorzelec Treaty with the GDR of 1950, which, however, lacked collective defense obligations and a casus foederis), were intended to provide an additional guarantee of Poland's new borders in the West. This is evidenced by the fact that they defined a casus foederis as engaging in armed hostilities with Germany, which would resume its policy of aggression[514]. Above all, however, they served to strengthen the position of the communist authorities and the systemic changes they introduced in the so-called people's democracies, as well as their intra-bloc ties. The significance of these treaties declined after the establishment of the Warsaw Pact, and their renewal in 1965–1970 (due to the expiration of previous agreements) was merely a political ritual and a sign of the permanence of Soviet domination over the satellite states[515]. It's hard to see them as sovereign attempts to increase autonomy from Moscow. Almost all states are members of the United Nations. Therefore, looking at the foreign policy of most states through the prism of international agreements, we have, roughly speaking, two tracks along which this policy unfolds. The UN Charter defines one of these tracks. The other is the result of alliance agreements signed by the state[516].

In the security policy of the Polish People's Republic, however, as mentioned, the mutual relationship between collective defense and collective security underwent a fundamental shift, with the latter mechanism becoming complementary to alliances, not the other way around. Under conditions of Soviet domination and vassalage, the prospect of national political autonomy was forced to disappear, and legal and institutional arrangements within the collective security framework supported by the UN played a secondary role. The roles of satellite states were strictly defined and overseen by Moscow, with little room for independent action, often interpreted as bloc insubordination. However, for Poland, crucial elements of collective security were those that fostered the stabilization of international relations—including by reducing the German threat and the risk of armed conflict and developing norms of state conduct. However, efforts to ensure the inviolability of borders, stemming from Polish interests, were inevitably linked, in the policy logic of this period, to

[513] W. Materski, *Dyplomacja Polski lubelskiej. Lipiec 1944 – marzec 1947*, Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Oficyna Wydawnicza RytmWarszawa 2007.
[514] J. Tyranowski, *Traktaty sojusznicze Polski Ludowej,* Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1972.
[515] J. Zając, R. Zięba, *Polska w stosunkach międzynarodowych*, Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2009, s. 123–125.
[516] K. Skubiszewski, *Umowy sojusznicze Polski a Karta Narodów Zjednoczonych*, „Ruch Prawniczy i Ekonomiczny" 1959, nr 3, s. 1. Autor w swojej analizie dochodził do wniosku, iż realizują one indywidualną lub zbiorową samoobronę zgodnie z Kartą Narodów Zjednoczonych (zwłaszcza jej art. 51), s. 16.

securing the territorial integrity of the zone of Soviet domination. Separating these two issues as political and legal categories became possible only after 1989.

The history of Polish participation in the UN began with the founding conference in San Francisco (April–June 1945). However, neither representatives of the government in London (due to Joseph Stalin's opposition) nor the provisional government subordinated to Moscow (opposition from the Western powers) were allowed to participate in its proceedings. Ultimately, therefore, Poland did not sign the UN Charter along with the other original signatories on June 26, 1945. It did so, retaining its founding status, only after the Western powers recognized the government in Poland in October of that year. Warsaw's stance during the first decade of the UN's existence was essentially limited to imitating the Soviet Union's position, primarily on security matters (including nuclear disarmament)[517].

After 1956, however, within the logic of bloc cooperation, one can speak of traces of Polish People's Republic diplomacy operating in accordance with national interests. This was evidenced by the gradual expansion of participation in specialized UN organizations and contacts with countries outside the bloc. The issue of the western border was approached with particular care, combating any allusions or formal provisions in documents suggesting the German origin of the so-called Recovered Territories. Poland voted with great discipline alongside the USSR and other communist states[518], having previously agreed on the position and scope of its own activities (as part of a specific division of roles among Moscow's satellites). At the same time, it had a certain amount of sympathy among Western countries, allowing it to symbolically expand its sovereign participation in the organization, for example, by being elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council or securing a seat for Polish candidates on the International Court of Justice. From 1957 to 1965, Poland participated in the work of the UN Disarmament Commission, and from 1961, the Conference on Disarmament. Polish scholarly literature published after 1989 repeated the opinion about the high activity of the Polish People's Republic in the work of the UN, its commitment to the principles of the Charter, the indivisibility of peace, the peaceful resolution of disputes, and its particular interest in security and disarmament matters[519], it bears similarities to the official propaganda of the

[517] J. Tebinka, Uzależnienie czy suwerenność? Odwilż październikowa w dyplomacji Polskiej Rzeczpospolitej Ludowej 1956–1961, Wydawnictwo Neriton, Instytut Historii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, Warszawa 2010, s. 274.
[518] . S. Parzymies, Polska w ONZ, w: M. Pietraś, K.A. Wojtaszczyk (red.), Rola Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych w kształtowaniu ładu międzynarodowego, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra-JR, Warszawa 2017, s. 239
[519] G. Labuda, W. Michowicz (red.), Historia dyplomacji polskiej X–XX w., Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, Warszawa 2002, s. 598–599.

People's Republic of Poland, overestimating both the activity and the importance of the position presented at the UN.

It should be emphasized that Poland was not a sovereign state at the time, which did not imply a lack of will or ability to attempt to act in accordance with national security interests. However, it did raise questions about the decision-making center formulating these interests and the perception in the West of the motives for the actions taken. This posed a real military threat to the Polish People's Republic, as Poland, as part of the Soviet military machine, would suffer all the resulting consequences in the event of an armed conflict (both sides planned to use nuclear weapons on Polish territory). Therefore, the collective security system remained in Poland's interest as long as it was able to contain this conflict[520].

The second context concerns the real significance of Polish initiatives for East-West relations, the military situation in Europe, and national security. Considering the aforementioned issues, Polish activity must be viewed through the prism of Soviet bloc interests. In this light, a critical approach to the so-called Rapacki Plan—widely considered by Polish scholars to be the most important initiative of the Polish People's Republic in the field of European security—seems crucial. It was proposed on October 2, 1957, by the then-Polish Foreign Minister at the UN General Assembly[521]. Apart from its noble general premises (limitation of the arms race, disarmament and East-West dialogue, denuclearization of Germany), its grounding in the principles of collective security, Soviet inspiration, and compliance with the USSR's strategic goal: pushing the US (and its armaments) out of Europe, the crucial question seems to be whether it was in Poland's interest to disrupt the (admittedly threatening) inter-bloc balance of power (Soviet conventional superiority offset by the presence of American nuclear weapons in Germany). Implementing the military portion of the plan would create a local source of conventional advantage for the USSR and the Warsaw Pact over NATO, not offset—as before the plan's potential implementation—by the presence of American tactical nuclear weapons in Germany. The temptation to qualitatively and quantitatively compensate for NATO's deterrent weakness would then increase. Poland—as a potential war zone—would therefore not be less vulnerable to the consequences of a potential conflict. Moreover, the USSR would gain greater operational freedom in Central Europe, encouraging more aggressive actions on the one hand, while reducing the enemy's sense

[520] L. Łukaszuk, *Polska w Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych*, w: S. Parzymies, I. Popiuk-Rysińska (red.), Polska w organizacjach międzynarodowych, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 1998, s. 53–57.
[521] T. Łoś-Nowak (red.), *Plan Rapackiego a bezpieczeństwo europejskie*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, Wrocław 1991.

of security on the other. As a result, the risk of conflict would increase, and Poland's real security would decrease[522].

An interesting and lasting feature of the security policy of the Polish People's Republic, included in the mechanisms of collective security, was the participation of the Polish People's Army in UN peacekeeping missions and operations[523]. Poland's role as a representative of the communist bloc was magnified by the absence of the USSR from these activities, as well as the institutional absence of the Warsaw Pact (similar to the USA and NATO, due to the risk of armed conflict in the event of direct inter-bloc conflicts during peacekeeping operations). This created an opportunity for Poland to gain specific operational experience, intelligence knowledge of conflict-prone areas, and promote its commitment to international peace. Importantly, though rarely mentioned, the expenditures for such activities (people and equipment)—reimbursed by the organization in hard currency and at favorable exchange rates—actually constituted a significant source of income for the state and the armed forces, as well as for the officers participating in missions. During the Cold War, Poland was therefore one of the largest participants in UN peacekeeping operations and other activities carried out in the spirit of collective security (after the end of the Cold War, for the aforementioned financial reasons, this role was taken over by third-world countries)[524].

In the mid-1970s, a regional collective security initiative also materialized. It involved the convening of a pan-European conference (with the participation of both superpowers) devoted to the foundations of inter-bloc relations. Alongside the intentions of reducing tensions and developing principles of peaceful coexistence, Leonid Brezhnev's plan lurked behind this initiative[525]. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, established in 1975, was also placed within this framework. For Moscow, this did not mean abandoning the ideological war, but opening a new front of confrontation with the West on terms more favorable to the communist world[526].

In relations between the two political and military blocs, the climate of détente at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s (expanding East-West contacts, mutual recognition by both German states, and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Federal Republic of Germany

[522] A. Skrzypek, *Dyplomatyczne dzieje PRL w latach 1956–1989*, Akademia Humanistyczna im. A. Gieysztora, Oficyna Wydawnicza Aspra-JR, Warszawa–Pułtusk 2010, s. 49
[523] G. Ciechanowski, *Operacje pokojowe ONZ w XX wieku*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2013.
[524] F. Gągor, K. Paszkowski, *Międzynarodowe operacje pokojowe w doktrynie obronnej RP*, A. Marszałek, Toruń 1999.
[525] R. Kupiecki, *Siła i solidarność*…, op. cit., s. 268–272.
[526] M. Ploetz, *NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Organisation at the time of euromissiles crisis, 1975 to 1985*, w: G. Schmidt (red.), A History of NATO. The First Fifty Years, t. 2, Palgrave, New York 2001, s. 212–213.

and communist states) favored a return to the idea of convening a pan-European conference. The USSR and its satellites had been pushing for this since the 1950s, seeing it as a way to legitimize the political status quo in Europe. This was prompted by a number of proposals, including those submitted by Poland[527] – concerning the incorporation of collective security instruments into East-West relations (under the banner of equal and verifiable security for all). For many years, this was perceived in the West – not without reason – as an attempt to negate the purpose of NATO and effectively eliminate the American military presence in Europe. Ultimately, contrary to the intentions of the military-security-oriented USSR, the lengthy preparatory negotiations also encompassed political issues of economic cooperation and human rights. Therefore, even if – as some Western critics pointed out – the assertion that the West had reinforced the Yalta division of Europe in Helsinki was based on rational premises (the actual legitimization of communist regimes in Eastern Europe and the Soviet sphere of influence), in the long run, the CSCE effect actually undermined Soviet rule in the area of the external empire. For Poland, a favorable premise regarding the western borders was the provisions of the Final Act, which stipulated the inviolability of borders in Europe (though not their recognition under international law)[528].

The Helsinki Act introduced issues of human rights, interpersonal relations, and personal exchange into East-West relations. The question of whether (communist) governments had the right to exercise their sovereign defense powers at the expense of restricting the rights of their own citizens became part of security policy. It also forced the communists to recognize that the internal functioning of states could also become a subject of legitimate interest to third parties as a source of threats to peace, enabling the West to publicly and formally oppose violations of civil liberties in the states of the Soviet external empire[529]. At the time, the USSR downplayed the practical significance of its concessions on human rights. Relatively quickly, it was forced to embrace a political confrontation focused on fundamental freedoms. The occasion for this was provided by events in the communist bloc countries, where societies demanded their rights, which the Soviets considered to be mere meaningless notes on paper. Nevertheless, these issues became a permanent part of East-West dialogue. This became evident, among other things, after the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan (1979–1989) and the

[527] A.D. Rotfeld (red.), *Od Helsinek do Madrytu. Dokumenty Konferencji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie 1973–1983,* Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 1983, s. 52–54.
[528] W. Jarząbek (red.), *PRL w politycznych strukturach Układu Warszawskiego w latach 1955–1980*, Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Warszawa 2008, s. 71–76.
[529] J.J. Maresca, *To Helsinki. The Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe 1973–1975*, Duke University Press, Durham 1985. Szerzej Z. Lachowski, Confidence and Security Building Measures in the New Europe, SIPRI Research Report 2004, nr 18.

imposition of martial law in Poland (1981–1983). However, even earlier, the democratic opposition in the Polish People's Republic[530] and Czechoslovakia, invoked the provisions of the Helsinki Act in its activities. Undermining the internal legitimacy of communist regimes in Central European countries undoubtedly became one of the side effects of the CSCE process. The alliances of the Polish People's Republic, and especially the Warsaw Pact, which constituted the axis of the country's security policy, served to maintain the country's subordination to the USSR rather than to advance national interests. They only strengthened its security, territorial integrity, and inviolability of borders to a limited extent. Although such goals were also set for participation in the UN collective security mechanism, Poland was part of the system of coordination of activities and division of labor of the Eastern Bloc countries. Within this framework, it is difficult to speak of sovereign behavior, although its activity in consolidating and developing international law, the participation of representatives in the work of numerous UN bodies, and its contribution to peacekeeping operations should be noted. This achievement proved useful after 1989 during the process of seeking membership in Western integration structures. Against this backdrop, the role of the CSCE grew over the years as a platform for East-West dialogue, but also as a source of norms that fostered the internal erosion of communist regimes, especially in the area of civil rights and freedoms. The CSCE's impact, although spread over time, proved to be very significant in the run-up to 1989.

After Poland regained its sovereignty after 1989, Poland benefited from the most favorable international economic climate in a century[531]. It rebuilt not only sovereignty but also strategic thought and practice, and anchored national security in the transatlantic alliance (NATO) and collective security mechanisms—regional (CSCE/OSCE), and universal (UN). The North Atlantic Alliance is of central importance to Poland, not only as a form of collective defense, a security guarantee, and a factor integrated with Poland's own defense efforts. It also symbolizes the country's enduring affiliation with the Western community. The UN and OSCE performed distinct functions in Polish security policy during this period—key to Poland's international status after 1989. The OSCE, in particular, played a significant role during this period, stabilizing the military situation in Poland's vicinity (through conventional arms control mechanisms and confidence-building measures). Since the beginning of the 21st century, the

[530] J.J. Lipski, KOR: *Komitet Obrony Robotników – Komitet Samoobrony Społecznej*, Wokół Nas: Głos Śląsko-Dąbrowski, Gliwice 1988, s. 25.
[531] R. Zięba, Poszukiwanie międzynarodowej roli Polski – konceptualizacja roli państwa średniej rangi, w: S. Bieleń (red.), Polityka zagraniczna Polski po wstąpieniu do NATO i do Unii Europejskiej. Problemy tożsamości i adaptacji, Difin, Warszawa 2010, s. 52–70.

role of both organizations has diminished, not only due to shifting national priorities but also to the clear weakening of collective security. The UN also lost much of its importance to the European Union in implementing Poland's selectively global security agenda after 2004. The connections between collective security and collective defense are being explored in scholarly discourse. The authors believe these are related, yet conceptually distinct, forms of organizing the security of contemporary states[532]. Assuming the similarity of the interests of the member states, they differ in their legal basis, goals, the complexity of the vision of security as a scarce good, the concept of the use of force (its scope and legitimacy), the organization of cooperation between states and, finally, their number in each of such associations[533]. This approach, especially in Anglo-Saxon studies, is not the only one, and researchers of these issues are sometimes inclined to consider collective security and collective defense as identical or even a terminological misunderstanding[534]. International organizations support Poland's security policy. Poland aspired to join them shortly after the democratic breakthrough in the early 1990s. Participation in organizations such as the North Atlantic Alliance and the European Union (then the European Community) was an expression of its affiliation with the world of Western democracies, but also a manifestation of its desire to ensure optimal conditions for the secure and stable development of the transforming state and society. These institutions were established, among other things, to provide the foundations for the political, economic, and military security of European states. After World War II, amid the Cold War and the real threat from the Soviet bloc, security guarantees were particularly crucial for establishing and maintaining stability in Western Europe. After 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe deemed it justified to join the zone of stability and security.

Summarizing our considerations, it is worth recalling that in the last century, Poland regained its independence, fighting with almost every neighbor over the shape of its borders, only to lose it again after a relatively short period of independence. From the subsequent conflagration of war, it emerged as a formally independent state, yet not sovereign and dependent on the will of the Soviet hegemon and the state of relations between the global superpowers. It regained freedom of action in the international environment only after almost another half-century, once again facing the challenges of ensuring the conditions for its

[532] R. Kupiecki, *Obrona kolektywna NATO. Stała misja i zmienny kontekst strategiczny*, „Rocznik Strategiczny" 2014/2015, s. 317–318.
[533] H. Kelsen, *Collective security and collective self-defense under the charter of the United Nations,* „The American Journal of International Law" 1948, nr 4, s. 783–796
[534] J.C. Ebegbulem, *The failure of collective security in the post World Wars I and Iinternational system*, „Transcience" 2011, nr 2, s. 23–29;

continued survival and development. In these circumstances, the issue of state security, strengthening its independence and territorial integrity, naturally became a central concern of foreign policy, and it was simply necessary to seek all available tools to achieve these goals. In all three phases of Polish independence after 1918, state policy sought to utilize the possibilities inherent in the mechanisms of both collective defense and collective security. However, the balance between the practice of security policy, the roles assigned to them, and their actual significance remained crucial. In the interwar period, Poland, in addition to intensive attempts to develop its own capabilities and potential, primarily relied on traditional security instruments, especially bilateral alliances. It referred to the then-current collective security system to a lesser extent, and often only out of necessity. This was the result of the powers' decision to transfer to the League of Nations certain matters vital to the security and sovereignty of the state (minority rights, border plebiscites, the status of the Free City of Danzig). This attitude toward the collective security mechanism likely stemmed in part from the novelty and obvious weaknesses of its contemporary form, and in part from the realities of the time and the ambivalent attitudes of key international actors towards it. This meant that many processes and actions crucial to Polish security occurred, as it were, alongside the League and contrary to its logic. Ultimately, the security policy of the Second Polish Republic ended in disaster with the loss of the war and occupation by hostile powers. However, it is difficult to trace this—even in light of the myth of the "Allied betrayal of 1939"—to a poor balance between the degree of commitment to its key multilateral instruments.

During the communist era, Poland did not independently decide on the scale of its involvement in individual multilateral security mechanisms. The Warsaw Pact was at the center of its policy in this regard. While it served to some extent as a stabilizing factor and a guarantee of border security and territorial integrity, it was even more instrumental in maintaining subordination to the USSR. Poland's activity in the global, and from the mid-1970s also in the regional collective security system—though controlled and somewhat regulated by the bloc's hegemon—more often served to build and demonstrate limited autonomy in international relations than to create solid foundations for Polish security (though this, too, was important, at least in some respects—e.g., disarmament and arms control, and the norms regulating international relations globally and in Europe). In this context, and given the rather negative past experiences of participation in multilateral security cooperation mechanisms, it is somewhat surprising that after regaining sovereignty in 1989, the conviction that state security should be based on precisely such instruments relatively quickly prevailed in Polish

politics. They were treated—rightly enough—as complementary, though with a clear priority given to NATO membership. This demonstrates a cautious assessment of the country's own capabilities and the opportunities offered by international cooperation, both based on collective defense mechanisms and forms of collective security (global and regional, of a general nature—the UN and OSCE—and sectoral—arms control and disarmament regimes). The focus on multilateral mechanisms was undoubtedly fostered by the post-Cold War international realities, in which the risk of armed conflict in Poland has been lowest since 1918 throughout this period, while the opportunities for multidimensional international cooperation are greatest. Nevertheless, for perhaps the first time in Poland's post-1918 history, it has been possible to relatively effectively utilize the potential of multilateral security policy instruments, despite their undoubtedly existing minor (NATO) and major (UN and OSCE) imperfections and the challenges they face. And importantly, now, to a much greater extent than in previous periods, it is up to Poland itself, its authorities and society whether this effectiveness can be maintained and perhaps even increased in the coming decades of independence.

7.2. NATO as a Fundamental Pillar of Poland's Military Security – From the Warsaw Pact to the North Atlantic Treaty

On June 29–30, 2022, the NATO Summit took place in Madrid, where a new NATO Strategic Concept was adopted. In it, the Allies reaffirmed the guarantee of collective defense against all threats, emphasizing NATO's determination to protect the security of its allies. The most important threats to the Alliance's security were identified as Russia's aggressive policies, China's activity, threats in cyberspace, terrorism, organized crime, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and threats emanating from the Middle East, Africa, the Sahel, and North Korea. Increased investment in new technologies was also announced. It is worth recalling that the end of the Cold War brought the third fundamental change to Poland's security environment in a century of independence – this time favorable. The collapse of the Eastern Bloc, and soon also of the USSR, enabled Poland to reject its satellite status and pursue a sovereign policy of gradual rapprochement with the West and its security institutions. The relatively quick treaty settlement of relations with Germany, including the final legal closure of the western border issue[535] allowed this issue to be removed from the agenda of Polish security policy. As part of its transition away from political dependence on the USSR, Poland was one of the initiators of the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, which ultimately took

[535] M. Jabłonowski, W. Janowski, G. Sołtysiak (red.), *Konferencja dwa plus cztery 1990. Aspekty polskie*, Wydział Dziennikarstwa, Informacji i Bibliologii Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2018.

place in July 1991. The process of change was implemented gradually – without provoking Moscow, which maintained its troops on Polish territory until 1993, and in recognition of the West's unwillingness to present a quick integration offer to the new democracies in Eastern Europe[536]. These changes, however, marked a return to the fate of the Second Polish Republic, when, with a stable West and neo-imperial Russia – the successor to the USSR in the East – a security vacuum of sorts was emerging in Central Europe.

In Poland, after the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, there was a consensus that this problem should be solved through integration with Western structures, including NATO. All alternative options that emerged in the debate – an attempt to pursue a policy of neutrality and non-alignment, relying on a regional collective security system based on the CSCE (transformed into the OSCE in 1994), creating a subregional collective security system or a Central European alliance (e.g., using the Visegrad Group, established – then known as the Triangle – in February 1991), maintaining some form of ties with the USSR/Russia, or incomplete NATO membership – were quickly deemed ineffective tools for building lasting foundations for Polish independence, the inviolability of borders, and security[537].

Society and politicians, the vast majority of whom were aware of the challenges of transformation, did not try to focus solely on developing their own capabilities, as was the case during the interwar period. They recognized the value of international cooperation in this regard, understood the strategic importance of integration with the West, and understood the need for internal reforms. In pursuit of NATO membership[538] the issue wasn't solely about participation in collective defense—although security guarantees were a strategic choice. Accession to the North Atlantic Alliance would constitute a civilizational decision, confirming Poland's lasting affiliation with the community of Western liberal democracies. Achieving this goal, as proof of Poland's stability and credibility, would facilitate integration with other Western structures, primarily the European Communities/European Union, which would lead to strengthening the foundations of the country's security.

Membership in NATO was not inconsistent with active participation in the regional (CSCE/OSCE) and universal (UN) collective security systems, allowing for the harmonious implementation of state policy on both these levels—previously difficult or impossible.

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[536] K. Skubiszewski, *Polityka zagraniczna i od- zyskanie niepodległości. Przemówienia, oświadczenia, wywiady 1989–1993,* Interpress, Warszawa 1997.
[537] R. Kuźniar, *Polityka bezpieczeństwa*…, op. cit., s. 71–77; R. Fawn, *Regionalne bezpieczeństwo i regionalne stosunki,* w: S.P. Ramet (red.), Polityka Europy Środkowej i Południowo-Wschodniej po 1989 roku, tłum. M. Gałąska, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 2012, s. 543–547
[538] R. Kupiecki, *Atlanticism in post-1989 Polish Foreign Policy*, w: R. Kuźniar (red.), Poland's *Security Policy 1989–2000*, Scholar Publishing House, Warsaw 2001, s. 229–285.

Participation in NATO's collective defense system initially became the main strategic goal of Polish foreign policy, and after joining the organization (March 12, 1999), its central component[539]. This happened regardless of the profound transformation that the Alliance underwent in the post-Cold War period, expanding the catalogue of its tasks[540]. This place of NATO in Polish security policy is confirmed by subsequent editions of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland[541]. Their provisions, without removing the specificity of national perception of security and defense issues, take into account the assumptions made in NATO's Strategic Concepts, in the formulation of which Poland participated[542].

Allied status influenced not only Polish strategic thinking but also the direction and scope of armed forces development programs and relevant planning procedures (emphasizing increased interoperability and integration of Polish forces with allied forces, especially the United States). Participation in the allied defense planning process, as well as in stabilization and peacekeeping operations conducted under NATO auspices, increased the effectiveness of relevant planning and decision-making processes in Poland, the organization of the security sector, and the equipment and training of soldiers, also contributing to a real increase in the defense budget. The value of allied investments in Polish military infrastructure significantly exceeded the total Polish contributions. Since its accession, Poland has advocated for the primacy of collective defense among the Alliance's tasks. However, restrictions on the deployment of allied forces and infrastructure on the territories of new members were adopted even before the first enlargement of the organization in 1999. Their effects have led to a certain exposure of NATO's eastern flank, which lacked the solutions typical of its western flank. The reversal of this situation began as a result of decisions made at the Newport Summit in 2014. A similar situation arose with efforts to increase the intensity of military exercises, also conducted on the Alliance's eastern borders. Poland generally preferred joint allied operations over narrower coalitions utilizing NATO resources and capabilities. However, a partial exception to this rule was Poland's participation in the coalition that intervened in Iraq in 2003, in the organization of which Poland benefited from the Alliance's—somewhat discreet, but important—support. This position stemmed from the fact that an Alliance that credibly fulfills its collective defense mission as a whole always multiplies Poland's national security potential. Transatlantic ties, of which Poland is a proponent, are of particular value in this regard.

[539] R. Kupiecki, *Atlanticism in post-1989*…, op. cit., s. 229–285.
[540] R. Kupiecki, *NATO u progu XXI wieku*, Akson, Warszawa 2000, zwł. s. 9–153.
[541] R. Kupiecki (red.), *Strategia bezpieczeństwa narodowego RP. Pierwsze 25 lat*, Wojskowe Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej im. płk. dypl. Mariana Porwita, Warszawa 2015.
[542] A.D. Rotfeld, *NATO 2020. Nowa koncepcja strategiczna*, „Sprawy Międzynarodowe" 2010, nr 4, s. 5–26.

Therefore, a constant motive for Poland's activities in NATO since accession has been its interest in strengthening the U.S. presence in Europe Polish-American bilateral military cooperation should be viewed in this perspective, including the development of military technology and equipment, exercises, and participation in the US missile defense program.

Amidst the deteriorating security situation in Europe, the United States was the first ally to strengthen its military presence in our region, also investing in Polish military infrastructure and creating storage facilities for its own equipment. This uncertainty is introduced by US President Donald Trump's openly and sharply critical policies towards NATO – primarily regarding the level of defense spending by European allies, as well as the transactional approach to international cooperation attributed to him. If, within this framework, US policy were to link concessions to Russia at the expense of European allies, this problem would be exacerbated. These actions are intended to strengthen NATO, as well as American guarantees to Poland[543]. This trend first became apparent in the early 21st century, during the US's focus on counterterrorism following the attacks of September 11, 2001. The decisive support given to Washington in counterterrorism initiatives at the time (including participation in the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the CIA's secret prison system) was the result of decisions aimed at strengthening relations with Washington. Ultimately, these efforts failed to produce such results, and Polish enthusiasm gradually waned as the difficulties and costs of the war on terror mounted, only to fade after the economic crisis and Barack Obama's assumption of office in the US.

Hopes for a strengthened special relationship with the United States were revived among the ruling elite and a segment of society after the 2015 parliamentary elections, and particularly after Donald Trump's election as US President. A contributing factor was the growing tension in Poland's relations with its Western European allies, which, admittedly, arose outside NATO, primarily due to disagreements within the EU. This prompted the Polish authorities not only to be skeptical of potential cooperation on real security matters within the EU but also to attempt to develop security cooperation (though not collective defense in the strict sense) within a subregional framework (the Three Seas Initiative). Poland's open stance on the continuation of the open-door policy and the development of cooperation with non-member states complements the characteristics of NATO's activities. Poland sees this as a benefit resulting

[543] Udział w NATO, zważywszy na jego potencjał, ale też współczesne środowisko międzynarodowe, minimalizował potrzebę poszukiwania dodatkowych gwarancji bezpieczeństwa Polski w drodze sojuszy dwustronnych. W wypadku zabiegów o jakąś formę bliższego, strategicznego partnerstwa z USA nie chodziło więc o powołanie alternatywnego bądź też równoległego względem NATO układu dwustronnego, lecz raczej o uzyskanie „wyjątkowej" rangi w relacjach z USA w ramach tej organizacji.

from the extension of common political and defense standards to additional European countries, particularly with countries in the Alliance's eastern neighborhood. In the matter of NATO-Russia relations, Poland has consistently made its readiness to expand cooperation conditional on compliance with jointly agreed standards and full respect for commitments[544]. Due to the strategic positioning of first the accession process and then the implementation of NATO membership in Polish security policy, the role of collective security institutions evolved significantly. They constituted a source of binding norms of international conduct, the mitigation of tensions, and global stabilization. The UN became a platform for selective state involvement in solving global problems (e.g., through development aid, disarmament agendas, or peacekeeping operations). Poland acted as a representative of the Western community, primarily the European Union and NATO[545]. Specific areas of involvement in the UN were largely a continuation of activities from the previous period. However, the methods of conducting policy changed, as Poland, for obvious reasons, regained freedom of action and initiative within the organization. At the same time, however, the clear priority of the Western direction (transatlantic and European) diminished the UN's importance within it, also in the context of manifesting Polish agency in the world (so important during the communist era)[546].

Warsaw, however, treated the UN as an important component of the international order with a special role in the sphere of human rights, arms reduction and disarmament, peacekeeping, and conflict prevention. It also continued to significantly participate in peacekeeping operations for two post-Cold War decades (until 2009), periodically contributing the largest share of forces to these missions. The withdrawal from these operations took place in 2009, when Poland's military priorities shifted towards participation in NATO and, ultimately, European Union operations, and the already smaller Polish armed forces had to carefully consider their personnel and the value of experience gained in UN missions. Today, Poland's participation in these missions is negligible (limited to observer activities), although proposals for a controlled return to these activities are emerging. A separate security issue where Poland contributes to the work of the UN is disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. An area of particular Polish activity was the elimination and prohibition of chemical weapons[547]. Warsaw played an active role in the negotiations of the

[544] R. Kupiecki, M. Menkiszak (red.), *Stosunki NATO–Federacja Rosyjska w świetle dokumentów*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2018; także R. Kupiecki, Organizacja Traktatu Północnoatlantyckiego, Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych, Warszawa 2016, s. 158–202

[545] G. Evans, *Australian foreign policy. Priorities in a changing World*, „Australian Outlook" 1989, nr 2, s. 12.

[546] R. Kuźniar, Droga do wolności. Polityka zagraniczna III Rzeczypospolitej, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Fundacja Studiów Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2008, s. 109.

[547] A.D. Rotfeld (red.), *Towards the UN Reform. New Threats, New Responses*, Diplomatic Academy of the

relevant Convention adopted in 1993, and over the next two decades in supporting the implementation of its provisions[548]. The UN's disarmament machinery is currently in a state of deep collapse, prompting a search for ways to repair it. With Poland's participation, these efforts are leading in two directions:

1) to invigorate the work of the UN Conference on Disarmament, which has been unable to adopt a work plan for years;

2) to bypass the UN stalemate and move non-proliferation activities – in the spirit of collective security and controlled inclusiveness – beyond its structures. An example of this latter formula is the American Proliferation Security Initiative, sometimes also referred to as the Krakow Initiative (PSI) after its first meeting in 2003.

Over the past three decades, the CSCE/OSCE has dramatically changed its role in Poland's security policy. Immediately after the end of the Cold War, it was hoped that it would transform into a pan-European collective security system equipped with effective institutions, common norms, and effective military and non-military instruments. On the one hand, invoking CSCE norms and commitments and working to strengthen them signaled the will to respect them in state policy and communicated aspirations for a community of democratic states. On the other, it was intended to prevent potential Russian revisionism, the brutalization of relations in the former USSR, and attempts to forcefully regain influence in the former external empire. Third, it also served as a kind of code stabilizing Euro-Atlantic political relations and the institutional chaos of the early post-Cold War years. This groundwork allowed for cooperation between the region's states and an attempt to reshape the regional security architecture.

The last decade of the 20th century was undoubtedly the most successful period in the OSCE's history[549]. Its rapid organizational development, anti-crisis mechanisms and institutions supporting the democratic development of states, as well as its activity in the field of human rights protection, protection of minorities, freedom of the press and political-military dimensions of security have built considerable achievements and credibility. The OSCE's development was also measured by the unique conventional arms control process, developed under its auspices, and a set of confidence-building measures in the military sphere, based on

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw 2004.

[548] .D. Rotfeld (red.), *New Political Act for the United Nations, The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs – Diplomatic* Academy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warsaw 2004.

[549] R. Zięba, *Polska w Organizacji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie*, w: S. Parzymies, I. Popiuk-Rysińska, Udział Polski w organizacjach międzynarodowych, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Scholar, Warszawa 2012, s. 179–202.

the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), the Open Skies Treaty, and the Vienna Document (amended many times, guaranteeing the transparency of military operations). Poland was strongly involved in all these dimensions of the organization's work. It not only contributed to the adopted solutions, but also benefited from their implementation. This was particularly true for the positive effects of the mass destruction of surplus offensive military equipment (under the CFE Treaty), which reduced the risk of sudden armed aggression. Warsaw (the easternmost capital of a Western country) is also home to one of the most important OSCE institutions – today known as the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR). It organizes annual global review conferences within the so-called human dimension framework and conducts dozens of impartial missions observing the conduct of elections in member states for their compliance with democratic standards. All this also facilitated a gradual rapprochement with Western countries, building the credibility of Poland's aspirations to join NATO[550]. The final chord of these activities was Poland's chairmanship of the OSCE in 1998.

In 1999, Poland became a member of NATO and, within its framework, coordinated positions on many issues in the OSCE's work (e.g., arms control). However, the organization had already ceased to offer hope of transforming itself into a guarantor of peace in Europe, capable of replacing alliances and linking the regional agendas of the superpowers. Key factors in this were Russia's growing assertiveness, blocking the organization's ability to operate in the former USSR, as well as accusations of applying unequal standards to the organization's Western and Eastern members. During this period, after fulfilling the obligations of the original CFE Treaty, the arms control process entered an inactive phase. While an adaptation of this document was negotiated, the new treaty did not enter into force. In 2007, Russia unilaterally suspended the application of its provisions, and in 2015, it withdrew from it completely. Following the annexation of Crimea, obstacles arose in the implementation of the Open Skies Treaty. The last functioning component of this system is the Vienna Document on Confidence-Building Measures, which has not been developed for years. The organization's crisis is reflected in the suspension of its highest-level meetings and the inability, for years, to agree on a final communiqué for the annual session of foreign ministers[551]. The last bastion where

[550] Szerzej R. Kuźniar, *Droga do wolności*…, op. cit., s. 88–92.
[551] M. Bużański, *Poland-flexibility to address a broad area of subjects*, w: A. Dienes, R. Krumm (red.), Perceptions of the OSCE in Europe and the USA, Vienna FES Regional Office for Cooperation and Peace in Europe, Vienna 2018, s. 75–82.

it tries to defend its mission and achievements are field missions conducted with the active participation of Poland.[552].

The complementarity of collective defense and collective security in the Republic of Poland's post-1989 policy differs from the models known from the Second Polish Republic and the Polish People's Republic, where they reinforced mutual deficits. After the end of the Cold War, Poland decisively chose the concept of basing security on NATO's firm political and military guarantees. Collective security institutions thus retained a role in those areas of state policy not directly implemented by the Alliance. In the case of the UN, this was a selective global agenda related to shaping the foundations of the international order and participating in resolving global problems. With regard to the OSCE, issues related to stabilizing and democratizing the post-Soviet space became a priority—especially after the crisis of the organization's political and military segment (arms control and confidence-building measures). The stance of the United States played a decisive role in achieving the security and stability goals of these organizations. Its leadership and the establishment of transatlantic cooperation contributed to the implementation of the security guarantees arising from the NATO Treaty[553].

In 1999, Poland, the Czech Republic, and Hungary joined the Alliance. For Poland, membership in NATO and the EU stemmed from our existential national interest. That's why the reality and effectiveness of Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty are so important, as the automatic application of this article is a foundation of security for Poland and other European states. The reality of this security in Poland has long been questioned due to German and French realpolitik toward Russia[554]. In the face of Russia's aggressive policy towards Ukraine (and previously towards Georgia), and especially as a result of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine from February 24, 2022, NATO plays the role of a guarantor of security not only for its members, but also for other European countries, a telling example of which is the accession to the Alliance of Sweden and Finland, which until now had pursued a policy of long-term neutrality[555].

Due to the ongoing war in Ukraine, during the NATO summit in Madrid, the Alliance adopted a new strategy that redefined its role in the new geopolitical realities, and above all

[552] B. Kucharczyk, A. Bolewski, *Międzynarodowe operacje pokojowe Organizacji Bezpieczeństwa i Współpracy w Europie*. Udział Polski w misjach terenowych, „Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy" 2011, nr 12, s. 90–102.
[553] J. Spero, *Déjà vu all over again: Poland's attempt to avoid entrapment between two belligerents* [w:] Central European Security Concerns. Bridge, Buffer or Barrier, ed. J. Kipp, London and New York 2021, s. 96–97.
[554] R. Kuraszkiewicz, *Polska w nowym świecie*, Warszawa 2021, s. 177.
[555] J. Solana, European security after NATO's Madrid summit, https://www.brookings.edu/blog/order-from-chaos/2022/06/24/european-security-after-natos-madrid-summit/ [dostęp: 14 września 2022].

in the conditions of destabilized sense of security in the Euro-Atlantic area as a result of Russia's military actions and Russian-Belarusian military integration, which also poses a threat to individual NATO countries, especially to the countries of the so-called Eastern Flank of NATO[556]. First and foremost, NATO has redefined its strategy. In the face of Russia's clearly hostile actions, NATO's actions are to be based on collective defense, encompassing both defense and deterrence, as well as countering threats, responding to crises, and developing cooperation with third-party partners (characteristically, representatives of Japan and South Korea attended the Alliance summit). To implement this new strategy, NATO is to strengthen its own resilience primarily by achieving a clear technological advantage over potential adversaries. Among these, Russia is foremost, cited as a direct threat to the security of NATO member states, particularly in Central Europe, due to its location. Furthermore, for the first time, China is cited as a challenge to NATO security, having significantly strengthened its military potential and strengthened its multidimensional partnership with Russia since the 1990s, when China became a mass buyer of Russian arms[557]. Due to the fact that the most important adversaries are countries that, like Russia, have a huge nuclear arsenal or, like China, are seeking to significantly expand it, the new NATO strategy also emphasizes nuclear deterrence[558].

For Poland's security, increasing NATO's potential on the Alliance's eastern flank is crucial. Although Poland and the Baltic states failed to transition NATO's eastern flank from forward presence to forward defense, they did succeed in strengthening the existing forces stationed on a rotational basis in the eastern flank states. As a result, the previously existing battlegroups in Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia were reinforced. Individual member states sent additional troops: Germany 350 to Lithuania, and Canada and Spain a combined 450 to Latvia (200 and 250 soldiers). The United Kingdom increased its presence in Estonia by 900 troops, in addition to its participation in the battlegroup, to a total of 1,700 troops, and sent 350 troops to Poland as bilateral support. Furthermore, individual states declared they would send additional forces to the Baltic states and Romania. Germany announced an increase in the Bundeswehr's presence (as part of the so-called allied presence) to 1,500 soldiers and the assignment of another 3,500 soldiers permanently stationed in Germany, who could be used to assist Lithuania if necessary. Similarly, the United Kingdom declared the assignment of 1,000

[556] J. Gotkowska, J. Tarociński, *Co po Madrycie? Szczyt NATO a bezpieczeństwo wschodniej flanki, „Komentarze OSW*", 5.07.2022, nr 462.
[557] M. Lubina, *Chiny i Rosja w nowym roku. Czy smok zje niedźwiedzia*, „Polityka" 2023, nr 1/2, s. 93.
[558] J. Gotkowska, J. Tarociński, op.cit., s. 2.

soldiers permanently stationed in the country, ready to assist Estonia. Canada, on the other hand, committed to increasing its presence in Latvia, as part of its engagement in the battlegroup, to brigade size. Furthermore, in March 2022, NATO decided to establish four more battlegroups in additional eastern flank countries – Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria. During the Madrid summit, the French President declared the deployment of forces up to brigade size[559]. In addition to deploying its units in battlegroups, the United States is increasing its own combat engagement, which exceeds the number of NATO forces.

At the Madrid Summit, the US declared a significant increase in its presence. Even before the Russian invasion, the US increased its troop strength in Poland to over 10,000, and as part of the redeployment of US troops from Western Europe to Romania and the Baltic states, approximately 2,000,000 soldiers and additional equipment were deployed. The US administration maintained its position regarding a rotational presence on the eastern flank, but it was decided that two land forces brigade combat teams would be present in the Baltic and Black Sea regions, instead of one as before. One armored brigade, present since 2017 and commanded in Poland, will be assigned to the Baltic Sea region, while the second brigade will be assigned to the Black Sea region on a rotational basis, commanded in Romania. Poznań is the permanent forward command post of the US V Corps, while the total number of US soldiers permanently or rotationally present in Europe is approximately 100,000[560].

The harsh reality has tested the military capabilities of NATO's European allies, particularly those on its eastern flank. Their limited mobilization capabilities make it impossible to ensure a broader presence of allied forces on the eastern flank. Therefore, even countries such as Germany, the United Kingdom, and Canada can only send individual units to the Baltic states, without the ability to deploy larger brigade-sized forces. The British will have a fully prepared division for operations in the continental theater of operations by 2030, while the Bundeswehr is expected to have a fully equipped brigade for the Alliance's rapid reaction forces by 2026, a fully modernized division by 2027, and two more by 2031. However, fulfilling Lithuania's request to permanently deploy one brigade on its territory will only be possible around 2027[561].

[559] *Ibidem*, s. 5
[560] *Ibidem*, s. 6–7.
[561] https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2022-12-06/oczekiwania-a-rzeczywistosc-brygady-nato-w-panstwach-baltyckich [dostęp z 30 grudnia 2022].

7.3. European Union Policy in the Context of Poland's Security

In the context of strengthening security, Poland and other Central European countries should also appropriately influence European Union policy, so that it becomes a more stable and balanced organization, without division into so-called old and new members. An organization within which actions will be coordinated to strengthen the various security aspects of member states, from matters related to military security (coordination of arms production and procurement) to issues related to economic, energy, and cybersecurity. Therefore, the current security strategy emphasizes the importance of such instruments of the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy as Permanent Structured Cooperation and the European Defense Fund[562].

According to Łukasz Gadzała, a country willing to cooperate with others and having ideas on how to leverage this cooperation for shared security and development is also becoming necessary in the system. It does not have to worry about its security as much as a country that isolates itself internationally, refuses dialogue, and is uninterested in the stability of the existing order[563].

In a crisis of values and identity, the European Union, as well as the societies of some other European countries disillusioned with the results of integration, should join the mainstream of European integration, as defined by the EU's founders, such as Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman, and Alcide De Gasperi. They openly invoked Europe's Christian roots but also believed that an integrated Europe would be safer, more united, and more prosperous. The new security situation, catalyzed by the war initiated by Russia against Ukraine (but also, more broadly, against the existing international order shaped by the influence of the United States and other Western countries), has revealed that it is rather difficult to expect the EU to be able to play the role of an independent actor in the international arena (although it does have the opportunity). In a situation where even the largest EU states struggle to make the independent decision to support a struggling Ukraine with more than a dozen tanks, it is even more difficult to envisage the creation of a common European army, or to expect the European Union to be strategically independent, or even to compete independently economically in the global market. The European Union's crucial role in assisting Ukraine

[562] Por. A. Kacprzyk, W. Lorenz, M. Terlikowski, *Polityka bezpieczeństwa RP* [w:] „Rocznik polskiej polityki zagranicznej" 2018, PISM, s. 64–68.

[563] Ł. Gadzała, Polska pośrednikiem narodów. Realistyczna korekta geopolityki, 12.11.2019, https://klubjagiellonski. pl/2019/11/12/polska-posrednikiem-narodow-realistyczna-korekta-geopolityki/ [dostęp: 26 stycznia 2023]

is undeniable. Economic and military aid to Ukraine has exceeded €50 billion by February 2023, and with bilateral military aid from EU member states, the figure is €66 billion. The EU transfers €1.5 billion monthly to support the functioning of the Ukrainian state. In addition to direct financial assistance, the EU is creating mechanisms (solidarity belts) to enable Ukraine to export grain and other agri-food products. This has allowed the transport of goods worth over 25% of Ukraine's GDP. The EU has also opened its single market to Ukrainian products and connected Ukraine to its electricity grid[564]. However, it is pointed out that given the collapse of economic globalization already during the COVID-19 pandemic, and exacerbated by the war in Ukraine, which also exposed the Sino-Russian alliance in politics and economics, and as a consequence, the possibility of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, Europe, in order to survive economically, must strive for a strategic political and economic partnership with the United States. Consequently, it is crucial to create "an area of economic cooperation, overlapping with the area of influence of NATO, or more broadly: Western democracies. The USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, and Europe (without the Russian Federation) constitute a newly defined area of the world that will likely develop economic and military ties in parallel." The crisis of leadership in the EU raises questions about the manner and effectiveness of EU member states' participation in these new geopolitical and geoeconomic configurations[565].

Poland's cooperation within the regional initiatives of Central and Eastern European countries is crucial. Our country participates in numerous formats, such as the Visegrad Group, the Three Seas Initiative, the Bucharest Format, and the Lublin Triangle, which are important elements of strengthening security broadly within Poland's foreign policy priorities. Global and regional factors support the intensification of regional cooperation. The changing and destabilizing international order necessitates intensified cooperation among Central and Eastern European countries, particularly in light of the multidimensional challenges and threats to regional security. To date, among Central European countries, only Poland and Romania have paid more attention to hybrid and military threats from Russia than their regional partners[566]. After Russia attacked Ukraine, these attitudes diverged, particularly among the Visegrad Group countries. Hungary took the closest stance to Russia, prioritizing pragmatism in the area of energy security. This forced them to maintain neutral, even friendly, relations with Russia,

[564] A. Słojewska, Unia nad Dnieprem: Ukraina zostanie członkiem UE. Pytanie tylko – kiedy, 3.02.2023, https://www.rp.pl/polityka/art37894101-unia-nad-dnieprem-ukraina-zostanie-czlonkiem-ue-pytanie-tylko-kie-dy [dostęp: 5 lutego 2023].
[565] M. Strzembosz, Tragifarsa, czyli polska racja stanu, 25.01.2023, https://www.rp.pl/publicystyka/art-37834311-maciej-strzembosz-tragifarsa-czyli-polska-racja-stanu [dostęp: 28 stycznia 2023].
[566] B. Nemeth, *Militarisation of cooperation against mass migration – the Central European Defence Cooperation (CEDC)*, „Defence&Security Analysis" 2018, vol. 34, no. 1, February 15, s. 18.

on which Hungary is energy dependent, not only in the area of oil and gas supplies but also in cooperation with Russia in the construction of a Hungarian nuclear power plant, as the Hungarian authorities issued a permit to Rosatom to build two new nuclear power plant units[567].

Meanwhile, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, which in the past often held pro-Russian stances, also stemming from the more favorable behavior of their citizens (especially Slovaks) toward Russia, have shifted their approach to a decidedly anti-Russian one (especially the Czech Republic). Russian aggression has also changed Ukraine's perception of its security partners. Previously, they looked primarily to the West, and above all to Germany, but now they understand that their fundamental security interests lie with Warsaw, not Berlin. Russia will remain a security concern for both countries for years to come[568], therefore, their cooperation in this sphere remains indispensable and should be a determinant of the Polish raison d'état, regardless of historical and contemporary controversies in bilateral relations, as Prime Minister Jan Olszewski pointed out just before his death[569]. A format that has existed as a forum for security cooperation since Russia's first invasion of Ukraine is the so-called Bucharest Nine (B9), established in 2014 at the initiative of Romania and Poland and bringing together NATO's eastern flank countries. The initiative aims to provide political and diplomatic support for strengthening NATO's military presence. At the same time, the effectiveness of this forum's activities is weakened by the often inconsistent positions of the B9 signatory states[570].

Established in 2020, the Lublin Triangle is a relatively new format for cooperation between Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine. One dimension of this cooperation is security, as for all three countries (and especially for Ukraine), Russia poses not only a potential but also a real threat. For Ukraine, this threat is existential. Security cooperation is obvious due to Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine's proximity to the actual and potential directions of Russian expansion and their shared stance on threats from Russia. These countries also share a common tradition of statehood dating back to the First Polish Republic and the wars with Russia, particularly in the 16th and 17th centuries, as well as the struggles against Russian and Soviet domination in the following centuries.

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[567] I. Trusewicz, Rosja rozbuduje elektrownię atomową na Węgrzech za swoje pieniądze, 30.08.2022, https://energia.rp.pl/atom/art36959891-rosja-rozbuduja-elektrownie-atomowa-na-wegrzech-za-swoje-pieniadze [dostęp: 2 grudnia 2022].

[568] M. Płociński, Wojciech Konończuk: Geografia jest w końcu po stronie Polski, 2.12.2022, https://www.rp.pl/plus-minus/art37533001-wojciech-kononczuk-geografia-jest-po-stronie-polski [dostęp: 5 grudnia 2022].

[569] P. Harczuk, Olszewski: Bandera nie odpowiada za Wołyń, 26.02.2018, https://polityka.se.pl/wiadomosci/olszewski-bandera-nie-odpowiada-za-woyn-aa-D98u-Cavz-hRhC.html [dostęp: 16 listopada 2022].

[570] O. Balogh, *Polska i Węgry w systemie bezpieczeństwa europejskiego*, Poznań 2022, s. 190.

A real example of cooperation in military security was the establishment of the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade (LIT-POLUKRBRIG), based in Lublin, whose symbolic value currently exceeds its military potential[571]. The Brigade is also an instrument for integrating the Ukrainian armed forces with the North Atlantic Alliance, especially in connection with granting Ukraine the status of a member of the NATO Enhanced Opportunities Program[572]. If unanimous consent is obtained from all three countries, the brigade or its affiliated units will be able to be used in international operations, in accordance with international law. However, in the event of war in Ukraine, the most important dimension of cooperation between the Lublin Triangle countries is assistance to the Ukrainian army in the form of supplies of weapons, ammunition, and other military equipment, as well as training of Ukrainian servicemen. Poland and Lithuania provide Ukraine not only with political support but also, through trilateral meetings at the level of presidents, mobilize other countries to intensify military support for Ukraine, as Russia utilizes all its military and human resources to maintain (and partially regain) the annexed territories in eastern and southern Ukraine[573].

Poland also serves as a logistical hub for the transfer of military, humanitarian, and material aid to Ukraine from other countries, particularly the United States. Cooperation within the Three Seas Initiative primarily addresses challenges and threats related to security dimensions other than military ones. However, their origins stem from Russia's unprecedented invasion, which irrevocably altered the geopolitical, geostrategic, and geoeconomic situation in Europe, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe, which applies to all Three Seas countries (except Austria). These geostrategic challenges stem not only from the destabilization caused by President Putin's decision to wage war in the region of Europe close to Poland, but also from the global strategic competition, in which China plays a key role, potentially influencing new important areas of technological and digital security. Therefore, it is suggested that the Three Seas countries should focus on collaborating on developing innovative technologies that directly impact security, deterrence, and defense, as the evolution of cyberspace progresses toward borderless competition and confrontation between both states and non-state actors.

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[571] J. Olchowski, *Trójkąt Lubelski – perspektywy współpracy [w:] Dziedzictwo Józefa Piłsudskiego i Symona Petlury. Przeszłość, teraźniejszość i przyszłość partnerstwa Polski i Ukrainy*, red. W. Baluk, J. Makar, M. Doroszko, Lubblin 2021, s. 346–347.

[572] . Drabczuk, A. Kuczyńska-Zonik, Trójkąt Lubelski – perspektywy współpracy polsko-litewsko-ukraińskiej, https://ies.lublin.pl/komentarze/trojkat-lubelski-perspektywy-wspolpracy-polsko-litewsko-ukrainskiej/ [dostęp: 16 listopada 2022].

[573] A. Łomanowski, Rosja atakuje, Zachód zapowiada czołgi dla Ukrainy, 12.01.2023, https://www.rp.pl/konflikty-zbrojne/art37762991-rosja-atakuje-zachod-zapowiada-czolgi-dla-ukrainy [dostęp: 12 stycznia 2023].

Therefore, the Three Seas countries must make joint efforts to secure their borders (including in cyberspace) and ensure the resilience and protection of their economies. They should establish new telecommunications connections and develop innovative digital projects that support regional cooperation in cybersecurity as sine qua non conditions for the geopolitical prosperity and security of this region[574].

7.4. Poland's Relations with the United States – History and Present

Poland's relations with the United States are based on a close political and military alliance, founded on shared security within NATO, the presence of American troops in Poland, and strong social and economic ties. Their shape has been shaped over the centuries by changing geopolitical conditions. Polish-American relations are based on a strategic defense and economic partnership, founded on shared interests within NATO and dynamically developing military cooperation. In 2026, these relations will be determined by the new policy of the Donald Trump administration. One of the key assumptions of Poland's National Security Strategy is the pursuit of permanent U.S. military bases, as well as record military spending.

Polish-American relations are one of the most important and controversial directions of Polish foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. Since the early 1990s, the United States, due to a number of objective and subjective factors, has played a fundamental role in efforts to advance Polish national interests internationally. The specific nature of bilateral relations, from Warsaw's perspective, was determined by issues such as aspirations for integration with Western structures (the North Atlantic Alliance, the European Union), the desire to obtain U.S. support for internal democratic and market reforms, as well as concerns related to, among other things, the specter of a revival of Russian-German cooperation in Central Europe and the Russian Federation's attempts to rebuild its former sphere of influence[575]. Close cooperation with the United States, with its privileged, international superpower position, was seen as an effective remedy for many of these problems. It is worth recalling the statement of Krzysztof Skubiszewski, who, in his 1991 parliamentary speech, said that the political and military involvement of the United States on the European continent is a crucial factor in maintaining

[574] I. Albrycht, Jak zadbać o bezpieczeństwo w regionie Trójmorza?, 17.07.2022, https://www.euractiv.pl/section/bezpieczenstwo-i-obrona/opinion/bezpieczenstwo-trojmorze-polska-rosja-nato-ukraina-cybersec-usa/ [dostęp: 12 stycznia 2023].

[575] R. Zięba: Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej Polski po zimnej wojnie. Warszawa 2010, s. 138—139; R. Kuźniar: Rola i znaczenie stosunków dwustronnych ze Stanami Zjednoczonymi. W: Polityka zagraniczna RP 1989—2002. Red. R. Kuźniar, K. Szczepanik. Warszawa 2002, s. 131—135; Rocznik Strategiczny 1997/98. Red. E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, D. Popławski. Warszawa 1998, s. 247—255.

peace, security, and stability. We are therefore striving to strengthen and create permanent forms of mutual cooperation for security and stability in Europe[576].

He emphasized the key role of the United States as a promoter of Polish democratic and market reforms. Initially, however, the government's efforts in subsequent years to elevate bilateral relations to the rank of an alliance were met with a rather lukewarm response from Washington. Many American politicians and intellectuals viewed Polish aspirations not only as a threat to the concept of a priority partnership with the Russian Federation, but also as potential difficulties in the reform process of the North Atlantic Alliance. This situation gradually began to change only at the turn of 1993 and 1994, when a growing number of representatives of the American establishment began to recognize the potential benefits of deeper cooperation with Poland, not only in stabilizing Central Europe but also in facilitating the realization of other US interests in Europe, thanks to Polish support. This was to be achieved, among other things, by US support for Poland's integration with the European Union, which was seen as an opportunity to eliminate the Gaullist character of the organization[577]. In this context, Poland's accession to the North Atlantic Alliance in 1999 not only meant entering a new era of national security[578] in connection with obtaining the guarantees of Article 5 of the Washington Treaty, but also opened up new perspectives for Polish-American relations.

A new phase in Polish-American relations was opened by the presidency of George W. Bush and the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. On the one hand, the start of the war on terrorism led to a significant intensification of mutual relations, primarily in the political and military spheres, as evidenced by, among other things, the deployment of a GROM unit to Afghanistan and the strengthening of military cooperation in 2002[579]. On the other hand, due to the uncritical attitude of the Polish political elites towards the actions of American neoconservatives, the first serious controversies began to emerge in bilateral relations. These were primarily related to the broadly understood security dimension, including issues such as the purchase of F-16 multi-role aircraft, the construction of elements of the U.S. anti-missile shield in Poland, participation in the interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the choice between Washington and European allies during the crisis in transatlantic relations. Particularly serious problems arose from the participation of Polish

[576] K. Skubiszewski: *Polityka zagraniczna i odzyskanie niepodległości. Przemówienia, oświadczenia, wywiady 1989—1993*. Warszawa 1997, s. 151.
[577] R. Zięba: *Polityka w ramach NATO i wobec Unii Europejskiej.* W: Polityka zagraniczna USA po zimnej wojnie. Red. J. Zając. Toruń 2006, s. 33—57.
[578] R. Kupiecki: *NATO u progu XXI wieku*. Warszawa 2000, s. 248.
[579] R. Kuźniar: *Rola i znaczenie stosunków dwustronnych…*, s. 137—139

soldiers in Operation Iraqi Freedom. This ultimately led to a breakdown in relations with some Western European countries, such as France and Germany, which was crucial to Polish interests. All decisions made after 2001 demonstrated Poland's unequivocally pro-American policy, which often yielded results of dubious benefit[580].

In 2007, Roman Kuźniar wrote that policy towards the US had been replaced by "infantile pro-Americanism" that could boast "no achievements." In his opinion, "self-dependence on the United States in the security sphere was deepening," accompanied by placing greater trust in US guarantees than in the North Atlantic Alliance. Charles Kupchan commented on this problem emphatically, saying: "For my taste, you are betting too much on one horse—the American one. You assume it is your protector, American soldiers will come to Poland if necessary, because we are together in Iraq. Well, the reality is that the United States is focusing its attention on completely different parts of the world. Ultimately, Poland's future lies in Europe"[581].

Given the controversy that arose around Polish-American relations at the time, it is worth considering how Polish-American policy evolved and what dilemmas it faced in the first and second decades of the 21st century. In the first decade of the 21st century, Polish-American relations were characterized by lively military contacts. Poland, seeing the United States as its main ally and guarantor of national security, undertook numerous questionable and controversial actions. A defining element of these relations was certainly the participation of the Polish Armed Forces in two foreign interventions initiated by the Americans at the beginning of the 21st century: in Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the first of these interventions was justified and related to the need to remove Al-Qaeda training bases from Central Asia[582]. The second sparked a heated, long-running discussion about its questionable reasons and unfavorable consequences for Polish national interests. Participation in the Iraqi conflict since 2003, which began in violation of international law[583]. According to Polish political elites, it was supposed to bring real benefits. Interestingly, the Polish Army's involvement in the operation was motivated not only by allied solidarity or a false threat to international security,

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[580] B. Balcerowicz, E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, D. Popławski, H. Szlajfer. *Rocznik Strategiczny 2006/07*.Warszawa 2007, s. 17.

[581] Żyjemy w czasach politycznego przesilenia. Zob. http://wiadomosci.dziennik.pl/wydarzenia/artykuly/196846,zyjemy-w -czasach-politycznego-przesilenia.html [data publikacji: 5.11.2007; dostęp: 14.03.2014]

[582] M. Lakomy: *Misja International Security Assistance Force w Afganistanie jako wyzwanie dla bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego*. „Studia Politicae Universitatis Silesiensis". T. 11. Katowice 2013, s. 194—230.

[583] J. Barcik: *Casus iracki jako przejaw nowej koncepcji okupacji „umiędzynarodowionej"*. „Sprawy Międzynarodowe" 2004, nr 4, s. 29; A. Bellamy: International Law and the War with Iraq. "Melbourne Journal of International Law" 2003, vol. 4.

but also by profits, both economic (contracts for the reconstruction of Iraq) and military[584]. On the one hand, Poland's participation in the Iraq War and its subsequent stabilization did indeed increase Poland's importance in American foreign policy. The White House began to refer to the bilateral relationship as a strategic partnership. On the other hand, however, Poland's elevation did not bring any of the previously announced benefits. According to Ryszard Zięba, when the Polish government began demanding the promised economic and other benefits, the United States remained unmoved[585]. Several years later, as the Polish Army gradually expanded its participation in the ISAF operation, similar criticisms began to surface regarding the Polish military's presence in Central Asia. Among the criticisms were the excessive operating costs of the Polish Military Contingent in Afghanistan, high casualties, the lack of preparedness of our military, dependence on the United States, and, finally, the lack of visible benefits from the involvement of Polish soldiers[586].

While some of these accusations were significantly exaggerated, they were based on the observation that allied solidarity with the United States did not serve Polish interests to the extent that political elites believed at the turn of the 21st century. In the first decade of the 21st century, Polish-American military cooperation, driven by participation in Iraqi and Afghan operations, was also vibrant in other areas. Above all, the United States provided limited support for efforts to modernize the Polish Armed Forces. This included cooperation under programs such as Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). Thanks to this, Polish troops acquired, among other things, HMMVEE vehicles (e.g., 217 in 2003/2004 under the FMF program), 140 lightly armored HMMVEE vehicles, and 40 Cougar mine-countermeasures vehicles for the Polish Military Contingent in Afghanistan[587] two Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigates in 2000 and 2002[588], or five C-130E Hercules transport aircraft in 2009-2012[589]. Both armies also organized regular exercises, particularly in the context of the ongoing mission in Afghanistan. On the U.S. side, elements

[584] M. Lasoń: *Polska misja w Iraku.* Kraków 2010, s. 98—139.
[585] R. Zięba: Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej Polski…, s. 155.
[586] M. Ogdowski: Czas opuścić Afganistan. Zob. http://fakty.interia.pl/raport-polacy -w -afganistanie/polacy-w -afganistanie/news-czas-opuscic-afganistan,nId,882568 [data publikacji: 23.06.2010; dostęp: 14.03.2014].
[587] R. Grodzki: *Polskoamerykańska współpraca wojskowa: stan i perspektywy*. „Biuletyn Instytutu Zachodniego" 2012, nr 114; K. Kołodnicki: HMMVEE w Wojsku Polskim. „Dziennik Zbrojny" 9.10.2012. Zob. http://dziennikzbrojny.pl/artykuly/art,2,4,2512,armie-swiata,wojsko -polskie,hmmwv-w -wojsku -polskim [dostęp: 17.03.2014]
[588] M. Cielma: Modernizacja polskich fregat Perry. „Dziennik Zbrojny" 13.11.2011. Zob. http://dziennikzbrojny.pl/artykuly/art,2,4,455,armie-swiata,wojsko -polskie,modernizacja-polskich -fregat -perry [dostęp: 17.03.2014].
[589] Pięć polskich Herculesów. Zob. http://www.polska -zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/ 4840?t=Piec -polskich -Herculesow - [data publikacji: 22.08.2012; dostęp: 17.03.2014].

of the U.S. Army Europe, the National Guard, and Special Operations Command participated. This allowed for the improvement of the operational readiness of selected domestic units[590].Cooperation between intelligence agencies also remained an important aspect of bilateral security relations.

This was reflected in the establishment of the Joint Polish-American Counterterrorism Working Group by the Polish Minister of Internal Affairs and the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw in the first quarter of 2005. Importantly, in February 2013, this form of cooperation was expanded to include an additional working subgroup, providing a platform for the exchange of information and best practices, as well as a means of facilitating communication between experts from both countries[591].

It's also worth mentioning the investments of American corporations in the Polish arms sector. This was exemplified by Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation's purchase of the PZL Mielec factory, which led to the commencement of production of S-70 and Black Hawk helicopters in Poland in 2010[592].This type of cooperation, on the one hand, played a significant role in Polish security policy, as it allowed for the expansion of the potential of both the Polish Army and the intelligence services. On the other hand, however, growing controversies and doubts surrounding security relations with Washington were increasingly noticed. Above all, attention was gradually drawn to the fundamental disproportion in financial and equipment assistance provided to the Polish army compared to support offered to other countries, which were not always as committed to American interests. For example, under the FMF program, between 1991 and 2007, Poland received a total of approximately $370 million for modernization and training purposes. In 2007, this assistance amounted to approximately $30 million. Meanwhile, in the same year, Egypt received $1.2 billion from the US, and Israel $2.3 billion. According to Przemysław Pacuła, Poland should expect a significant increase in US involvement in the modernization of the Polish army. The costs incurred by Poland […] are certainly an additional argument in our favor"[593]. The questionable quality of weapons received from the US and

[590] Polskoamerykańska dwustronna współpraca wojskowa — podstawowe informacje . Biuro Prasowe, Biały Dom. Zob. http://photos.state.gov/libraries/poland/788/pdfs/Polsko-amerykaska%20dwustronna%20wsppraca%20obronna.pdf [data publikacji: 28.05.2011; dostęp: 17.03.2014]

[591] Wspólna Polsko-Amerykańska Grupa Robocza ds. Zwalczania Terroryzmu. Agencja Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego. Zob. http://www.antyterroryzm.gov.pl/CAT/antyterroryzm/wspol praca -zagraniczna/wspolna -polsko -ameryka/585,Wspolna -Polsko -Amerykanska -Grupa-Robocza-ds -Zwalczania -Terroryzmu.html [dostęp: 18.03.2014].

[592] R. Grodzki: *Polsko amerykańska współpraca wojskowa: stan i perspektywy*. „Biuletyn Instytutu Zachodniego" 2012, nr 114.

[593] P. Pacuła: *Polska — USA: co może nam dać partnerstwo z Waszyngtonem*?. „Bezpieczeństwo Narodowe" 2008, nr 1—2, s. 88.

significant delays in their delivery also began to be noticed. The acquired HMMVEE vehicles, used in foreign missions, were quickly dubbed "rolling coffins" due to their lack of adequate armor. In the case of the OHP ships, attention was drawn to their significant unreliability, high wear rates, and marginal combat value. There were even claims that the equipment acquired from the US was only fit for scrap. Finally, the case of the C-130E Hercules transport aircraft, whose deliveries were significantly delayed, became a sign of the low quality of US military aid. Furthermore, these aircraft proved highly unreliable in current use, which led to the temporary suspension of their flights in 2010[594].Additionally, it is worth mentioning the apparent reluctance of the United States to sell certain modern weapons to Poland. When Donald Tusk's government expressed its willingness to purchase Patriot anti-aircraft systems[595], The White House took a rather ambiguous stance. While they agreed to sell them, they did so for a price three times higher than the price offered to South Korea[596].

In this context, towards the end of the first decade of the 21st century, although there were signs of a desire to partially balance the political relations between Poland and the United States, this was less visible in the military dimension. Initially, the Polish government did indeed take a firm stance on the installation of missile defense elements in Poland. A much greater emphasis was also placed on activity within the European Union, and the process of phasing out the Polish presence in Iraq began. On the other hand, this strategy was partially softened after the outbreak of the Georgian-Russian war in August 2008. By signing the agreement on the construction of the missile defense shield in Poland on August 20th, Poland abandoned most of the previously formulated conditions and demands, including a larger U.S. contribution to Polish defense. Furthermore, efforts began to intensify for the permanent deployment of U.S. Army units in Poland[597]. This type of decision was seen as a valuable instrument of Polish security policy. These ambitions stemmed from two beliefs: first, the presence of US troops would deter potential attackers, and second, that in the event of an armed conflict on Polish territory, they would actively participate in its defense. Both assumptions, however, were quite questionable for four reasons. Barack Obama's decision of September 17, 2009, clearly indicated that the new American administration's priority was

[594] *Polski C 130E na złom* ? Agencja Lotnicza Altair. Zob. http://www.altair.com.pl/news/ view?news_id=4019 [data publikacji: 10.02.2010; dostęp: 18.03.2014]; ORP Pułaski — pływający złom. Agencja Lotnicza Altair. Zob. http://www.altair.com.pl/news/view?news_id=2487 [data publikacji: 25.02.2009; dostęp: 26.03.2014].
[595] Polskie władze sugerowały również zakup systemów THAAD. W tym wypadku Waszyngton również zachował sceptycyzm. Zob. P. Pacuła: Polska — USA: co może nam dać partnerstwo z Waszyngtonem?…
[596] R. Zięba: Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej Polski…, s. 159.
[597] Rocznik Strategiczny 2008/09. Red. R. Kuźniar. Warszawa 2009, s. 306—307; M. Lakomy: *Geopolityczne następstwa wojny gruzińsko rosyjskiej*. „Przegląd Zachodni" 2010, nr 4; R. Zięba: Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej Polski…, s. 159.

to improve relations with Russia at the expense of relations with former strategic partners[598]. It should be emphasized that Barack Obama abandoned the project, promoted since 2006 by the George W. Bush administration, in favor of a cheaper alternative focused on the threat of Iranian short- and medium-range missiles. The plan to build bases in Poland and the Czech Republic was replaced by the concept of basing the system on SM-3 missiles, which were intended to primarily protect the territories of Southeastern European countries and Turkey. The United States also declared that Poland would be allowed to participate in the development of the missile defense system, but only at later stages. According to Barack Obama, the new missile defense policy was intended to make the defense of the United States and its allies in Europe more perfect, stronger, more flexible, and faster. Obama assured that the United States would continue cooperation with America's close friends and allies: the Czech Republic and Poland. The events of the Georgian-Russian War demonstrated that the presence of US troops does not necessarily protect against external invasion. These forces, at the outbreak of war, could immediately leave the territory where the conflict was taking place, without taking into account the increased threat of terrorist attacks, as well as other unconventional challenges, related, for example, to the actions of the Russian Federation[599].

Despite these doubts, the intended direction of military cooperation continued, as evidenced by the signing of an agreement on the status of the United States Armed Forces in the territory of the Republic of Poland in December 2009. This agreement regulated the rotational stationing of a Patriot air defense battery in Poland. Although the preamble to the agreement stated that the purpose of the presence of United States forces in the territory of the Republic of Poland was to participate in joint defense operations and promote peace and security in areas of mutual interest[600], In practice, however, this presence looked somewhat different. It quickly became clear that the White House did not intend to address the position of, among others, Minister of National Defense Bogdan Klich, who indicated that these units

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[598] P. Pacuła: *Konsekwencje decyzji prezydenta USA Baracka Obamy, w sprawie przyszłości systemu obrony przeciwrakietowej.* „Analiza BBN" 22.09.2009, s. 3—4; J. Stachura: Administracja Baracka Obamy — ile przełomu, ile kontynuacji?. „Stosunki Międzynarodowe — International Relations" 2009, nr 1—2, s. 23—25; J. Mason, A. Entous: U.S. replaces Bush plan for Europe missileshield. Zob. http://www.reuters.com/article/2009/09/17/us-usa-shield -idUSLH51098820090917.
[data publikacji: 17.09.2009; dostęp: 20.03.2014]; „Decyzja Obamy w rocznicę 17 września? To gafa". Zob. http://konflikty.wp.pl/kat,1356,title,Decyzja-Obamy-w-rocznice-17 -wrzesnia -To -gafa,wid,11509479,wiadomosc.html [data publikacji: 18.09.2009; dostęp: 20.03.2014].

[599] Zob. Rosyjski generał: Polska 100 proc. celem ataku. Zob. http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114873,5592839,Rosyjski_general__Polska_100_proc__celem_ataku.html [data publikacji: 15.08.2008; dostęp: 24.03.2014].

[600] Umowa między rządem Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej a rządem Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki o statusie sił zbrojnych Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki na terytorium Rzeczy- pospolitej Polskiej. RM 10-175 -09. Warszawa, 11.12.2009.

should become part of the Polish air defense system. Therefore, from the outset, they were used exclusively for training the Polish army. According to the Americans, this cooperation was to result in the purchase of Patriot systems by the Polish Army[601].

After several years, a decision was also made to deepen air force cooperation. On June 13, 2011, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the Minister of National Defense and the United States Department of Defense regarding cooperation between the Polish and United States Air Forces on Polish territory. The Strategic Dialogue was also resumed in 2010. Meetings of the Consultative Group on Strategic Cooperation and the High-Level Group on Defense Affairs were held[602]. As a result, in November 2012, the model of the American presence in Poland was changed. Instead of an anti-aircraft missile battery, a rotating aviation detachment was brought to Poland, consisting of F-16 multi-role aircraft and C-130E Hercules transport aircraft. According to the agreement, it was to appear quarterly, solely for training purposes. The Minister of National Defense commented on this agreement as a small step in Poland's great relationship with the United States[603]. While all these actions were consistent with a long-standing trend of seeking to expand the American military presence in Poland, they did not align with the ambitions of the Polish government, which was primarily due to the skepticism of the White House. Washington did not perceive Central Europe as a strategic area for its own national interests[604]. It is worth noting that, against the backdrop of the crisis in Ukraine in February and March 2014, the previous priorities of Polish American military policy were confirmed. In response to the Russian Federation's occupation of Crimea, the Polish Ministry of National Defense requested the United States to expand the scope of bilateral military cooperation. Washington responded by accelerating and modifying the program of joint exercises as part of the American Aviation Detachment's stay at the air base in Łask. Instead of the Hercules transport aircraft, which were scheduled to arrive in late spring, it was decided to quickly dispatch 12 F-16 fighters and an AWACS aircraft, which were to participate

[601] Rakiety Patriot w Polsce — nie tylko do szkolenia. Zob. http://fakty.interia.pl/raport-tarcza--antyrakietowa/aktualnosci/news-rakiety-patriot-w-polsce-nie-tylko-do-szkole nia,nId,860535 [data publikacji: 26.05.2009; dostęp: 18.03.2014]; US Patriot missile battery arrives in Poland. „The Telegraph" 24.05.2010. Zob. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/poland /7760382/US -Patriot-missile-battery-arrives-in -Poland.html [dostęp: 21.03.2014].

[602] Polskoamerykańskie stosunki dwustronne. Zob. http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/inne_kontynenty/ameryka_polnocna/stosunki_dwustronne_amer yka_pln/polsko_amerykanskie_stosunki_dwustronne?printMode=true [dostęp: 21.03.2014].

[603] Ł. Zalesiński: Amerykanie wylądowali. Zob. http://www.polska-zbrojna.pl/home/ articleshow/5401?t=Amerykanie-wyladowali [data publikacji: 09.11.2012; dostęp: 21.03.2014]

[604] R. Grodzki: *Polsko amerykańska współpraca wojskowa: stan i perspektywy*. „Biuletyn Instytutu Zachodniego" 2012, nr 114.

in joint exercises with the Polish Air Force[605]. These events confirmed that the Polish government still saw cooperation with the U.S. as the fundamental guarantee of the country's territorial integrity. Many commentators viewed the White House's reaction as a show of strength and determination to defend its allies in Central Europe, especially since President Obama announced a further expansion of its military presence, including in Poland, in the future[606].

These events confirmed that the Polish government still saw cooperation with the U.S. as the fundamental guarantee of the country's territorial integrity. Many commentators viewed the White House's reaction as a show of strength and determination to defend its allies in Central Europe, especially since President Obama announced a further expansion of its military presence, including in Poland, in the future[607]. Despite a significant increase in NATO forces, even the most fundamental goal of stabilizing the situation in Central Asia was not achieved. Consequently, Barack Obama, in his June 2011 speech, gave a clear signal to retreat. At that time, he announced the beginning of the process of withdrawing American troops from Afghanistan, which was to culminate in the authorities in Kabul assuming full responsibility for their own security in 2014. Polish authorities, who had previously suggested taking steps in this direction, took a similar stance. Stanisław Koziej had already argued that the Alliance's "exhaustion" from this war could lead to a "strategic catastrophe." Moreover, in his opinion, for Poland, this would mean a serious weakening of the most important external pillar of our security[608]. This threat was evident, especially since the US experienced a certain discouragement towards this organization at that time. Jadwiga Kiwerska rightly noted that ISAF, in the White House's opinion, confirmed the lack of will to decisively support the efforts of the United States. In her opinion, Afghanistan "also exposed the weaknesses of the North Atlantic Alliance, including the lack of determination and sense of shared responsibility of some of its members. And yet, formally, it was a mission conducted under the NATO flag. Despite

[605] Amerykańskie F 16 wylądowały w Łasku. „Nowy Dziennik" 13.03.2014. Zob. http:// www.dziennik.com/wiadomosci/artykul/amerykanskie-f-16 -wyladowaly-w-lasku [dostęp: 21.03.2014]; Ambasador USA w Polsce: Amerykanie przygotowują duże ćwiczenia wojskowe w Polsce. Zob. http://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/ambasador-usa-w-polsce -amerykanie -przygotowuja -duze -cwiczenia -wojskowe-w -bazie -w/le539 [dostęp: 21.03.2014].

[606] Sojusz gwarancją bezpieczeństwa Polski. Zob. http://polska -zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/ 12048?t=Sojusz -gwarancja -bezpieczenstwa-Polski [data publikacji: 27.03.2014; dostęp: 28.03.2014]; 12 amerykańskich F 16 w Polsce. "To tak, jak sto podczas II wojny światowej". Zob. http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci -ze -swiata,2/12 -amerykanskich -f -16 -w -polsce -to -tak -jak-sto -podczas-ii -wojny -swiatowej,405304.html [data publikacji: 7.03.2014; dostęp: 24.03.2014].

[607] M. Ziółkowski: *Polityka bezpieczeństwa Polski*. „Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej" 2007, s. 71—75.

[608] S. Koziej: *NATO zmęczone. Nie ma perspektyw*. Zob. http://fakty.interia.pl/raport -polacy-w-afganistanie/polacy-w-afganistanie/news-koziej-nato-zmeczone-nie-ma-perspektyw,nId,882708 [data publikacji: 24.06.2010; dostęp: 14.03.2014]

these unfavorable trends, corrective measures were taken in parallel, as expressed in the NATO strategic concept adopted in November 2010 in Lisbon. It contained a very strong confirmation of the idea of collective defense, which was of interest to Poland. It also announced the continuation of actions aimed at crisis prevention, conflict monitoring and stabilization of countries after the end of hostilities, which was, in turn, pressed by the United States[609]. However, contrary to hopes, the new document regulating NATO's functioning did not lead to a breakthrough or revitalization of the organization. As the authors of the 2012/13 Strategic Yearbook rightly stated, as long as NATO remained stuck in Afghanistan, no serious program of its reform or modernization was possible[610].

However, a certain rift between Poland and the United States has deepened regarding the Alliance's external functions. During the NATO intervention in Libya, which began in March 2011, for the first time in history, the United States did not assume leadership of the Euro-Atlantic community, limiting itself to supporting the leadership of France and the United Kingdom from the second line. This proved that NATO remains a useful crisis response instrument that can be utilized by Europeans. On the other hand, two fundamental doubts arose. First, it was assessed that the U.S.'s abandonment of its leadership role in this war could result in a weakening of mutual trust and transatlantic ties. Second, Poland, although officially supporting the Libyan operation, chose not to participate directly. Many other member states, including Germany, followed a similar course[611]. As a result, this sparked criticism of Berlin and Warsaw from the US administration. This was reflected, among other things, in a speech by the US Secretary of Defense in June 2011, during which he called on both countries to participate in a military intervention[612].

In this context, it is also worth mentioning the North Atlantic Treaty Organization summit in Chicago, which took place in May 2012. The will to maintain strategic ties on both sides of the Atlantic was reaffirmed, which was beneficial from Warsaw's perspective. However, further signs of a certain division within the Alliance could be observed, between expeditionary countries and those, including Poland, that expected a greater emphasis on defense. The differences between the US and Poland were reflected, among other things, in the White House's proposal that Poland co-finance Afghan troops with $20 million annually

[609] P. Matera: *Relacje transatlantyckie w czasie prezydentury Baracka Obamy*. „Przegląd Zachodni" 2012, nr 4, s. 70.
[610] Rocznik Strategiczny 2012…, s. 37
[611] Ibidem, s. 72—73.
[612] Gates Urges U.S. Allies to Increase Strikes in Libya. Zob. http://www.foxnews.com/politics/ 2011/06/08/gates-urges-us -allies -to-increase-role -in -libya-conflict/ [data publikacji: 8.06.2011; dostęp: 14.03.2014].

after 2014. This provoked a negative reaction from the Polish authorities, both due to the costs of participating in the ISAF mission and the objective shift in American policy's focus eastward. In this regard, the head of the National Security Bureau, Stanisław Koziej, stated that since Americans are moving from Europe to Asia, we must return from Asia to Europe[613]. Moreover, during the Chicago summit, no serious initiatives were taken to truly reform the North Atlantic Treaty, which was not to our advantage[614].

It should be emphasized that this persistent disagreement between Polish and American diplomats regarding the use of the Alliance in crisis response missions was confirmed in the second half of 2013 in connection with the events in Syria. The White House, attempting to intervene against the regime of Bashar al-Assad at that time, only initially placed its hopes on utilizing NATO structures. Faced with member states' reluctance to support American plans, the Obama administration began to show a tendency to bypass seeking support from both the United Nations and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization[615].

It's worth considering whether the gradual shift in American policy's focus towards Asia will ultimately lead to the marginalization of NATO as the anchor of the American presence in Europe? Such a turn of events would force a redefinition of the fundamental assumptions of Polish security policy. Furthermore, with the failure of the operation in Afghanistan and Washington's different policy towards humanitarian interventions in both Libya and Syria, a question has emerged in recent years about the future functioning of NATO. The US is clearly losing interest in leading the Alliance. Internal divisions are also evident regarding its stance on foreign interventions. Differences in this regard between Poland and the US, imperceptible even in the second half of the 2000s, have become another factor that could weaken NATO's effectiveness as the foundation of Polish security policy.

7.4.1. Polish-American Relations in Political Perspective

On January 20, 2009, Barack Obama was sworn in as President of the United States. The change of administration from Republican to Democratic, as well as the mild rhetoric of the then-candidate for the highest office in the US, led to genuine expectations for his proposed change in domestic policy, but above all, in foreign policy. Even during the election

[613] B. Balcerowicz, E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, D. Popławski, H. Szlajfer. *Rocznik Strategiczny*, Warszawa 2013, s. 196; M.A. Belfer: *Editor's Policy Analysis. NATO: From Lisbon to Chicago to Irrelevance*? "Central European Journal of International and Security Studies" 2012, No 2, s. 4—10.
[614] *Rocznik Strategiczny* 2012…, s. 37.
[615] B.S. Begawan: U.S. No Longer Seeking U.N., NATO Permission to Strike Syria. Zob. http://www.defenseone.com/politics/2013/08/us-no-longer-seeking-un-nato-permission-strike-syria/69446/ [data publikacji: 27.08.2013; dostęp: 14.03.2014]

campaign, Barack Obama advocated the need to end two wars initiated and fought by the United States. For the administration of the former George W. Bush, Afghanistan and Iraq became symbols of foreign policy failure. Barack Obama presented a new perspective on the war on terrorism, preventive strikes, and the American military presence abroad. The policy pursued by the authorities of the Third Polish Republic towards the United States became so uncritical by the end of the last decade of the 20th century that many eminent experts in international relations shared the view of Ryszard Zięba, who described it as a stage of clientelism and self-vassalization[616].

In the period 1999-2007, Polish-American relations were characterized by, among others, support for NATO military operations and the air raids on Serbia in 1999 without the consent of the UN Security Council[617]. Moreover, maintaining a distanced stance towards the development of the concept of the EU's European Security and Defence Policy while supporting the Euro-Atlantic security model; completely uncritical support for Washington in the war on terrorism idealised by Poland after the Al-Qaeda attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on September 11, 2001[618]; cooperation in building an anti-terrorist coalition and military participation in the wars in Afghanistan (since March 2002, participation of Polish soldiers in ISAF forces) and in Iraq (signing of the "Letter of Eight"[619].

The illegality of the intervention in Iraq was pointed out, among others, by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan in his statement of 16 September 2004. Furthermore, the involvement of the Polish contingent in the aggression since March 2003[620] against the regime of Saddam Hussein [621], occupation of Iraqi territory within one of the designated zones, and subsequently, until October 2008, participation in stabilization activities in that country [622];the decision of the Polish government of 27 December 2002 to purchase 48 American F-16 fighter aircraft for USD 3.5 billion under an offset agreement, despite more advantageous offers from the Swedish, British and French sides[623]. Let us also add the high frequency of mutual visits

[616] R. Zięba: *Główne kierunki polityki zagranicznej*…, s. 149—157.
[617] J. Kiwerska: *Gra o Europę. Bezpieczeństwo europejskie w polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych pod koniec XX wieku*. Poznań 2000, s. 372-396; Rocznik Strategiczny 1999/2000. Warszawa 2000, s. 315-325
[618] J. Stachura: *Rola i znaczenie stosunków dwustronnych ze Stanami Zjednoczonymi. W: Polityka zagraniczna RP 1989-2002.* Red. R. Kuźniar, K. Szczepanik. Warszawa 2006, s. 139-140.
[619] Europe and America Must Stand United. "The Times" 30.01.2003. Zob. http://www.tim sonline.co.uk/tol/comment/article858456.ece [dostęp: 19.03.2014]
[620] N. Shultz: *Was the War in Iraq legal*? — The German Federal Administrative Court's Judgement of 21st June 2005. "German Law Journal" 2005, no 1, s. 32.
[621] O. Osica: *Irak — początek nowej epoki w polityce zagranicznej III RP*?. „Raporty i Analizy" 2004, nr 4, s. 2-4, s. 7; J. Rybak: *Grom.Pl. Tajne operacje w Afganistanie*…, s. 8—9, 162, 194, 206.
[622] M. Stolarczyk: *Kontrowersje wokół militarnego zaangażowania Polski w Iraku*. „Przegląd Zachodni" 2005, nr 1, s. 72—80, 84—91;
[623] B.R. Seguin: Why did Poland Choose the F 16?. "Occasional Paper Series" 2007, no 11. Zob.

and contacts between high-ranking representatives of both countries, the issue of CIA prisons since 2005 [624]; and finally, the consent of the Polish authorities to deploy elements of the American anti-missile defense system on Polish territory, despite the conservative stance of the EU allies towards the anti-missile shield project and the risk of deterioration of relations with neighbors (especially Russia)[625].

At the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, it is worth asking what the nature of bilateral relations between Poland and the United States is? Is this self-vassalization, clientelism, and the chosen role of a loyal ally of the United States?[626] Did they actually, according to the Polish authorities, imply a deepening of mutual relations, or did they contribute to Poland's continued dependence on Washington's policies, both politically and militarily? Do the words spoken by US President George W. Bush on January 14, 2003, during a meeting with President Aleksander Kwaśniewski at the White House, that the United States has no better friend in Europe than Poland, still hold true? In the first quarter of 2014, the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs consistently proclaimed: Maintaining lasting, allied relations with the United States remains one of the strategic tasks of Polish foreign policy. The priority goal is to strengthen Poland's role in the international arena and ensure our country's security through cooperation within the North Atlantic Alliance and the systematic expansion of bilateral cooperation. Relations with the US are a key element in building Poland's position in the transatlantic space, complementing and strengthening our international position shaped within the EU. Cooperation with Washington covers the full range of international relations – from economic issues, through security, democracy promotion, to people-to-people contacts and cultural relations.[627].

In Polish-American political relations, the Community of Democracies, initiated in 2000, plays a significant role, becoming an important forum for bilateral cooperation, especially in the context of democratization processes in the post-Soviet area (especially in Belarus),

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http://www.marshallcenter.org/mcpublicweb/MCDocs/files/College/F_Publications/occPapers/occ-paper_11-en.pdf [dostęp: 20.03.2014].

[624] Council of Europe: Secret CIA Prisons Confirmed. Humant Rights Watch. Zob. http://www.hrw.org/news/2007/06/07/council-europe-secret -cia -prisons-confirmed. [data publikacji: 7.06.2007; dostęp: 15.05.2014].

[625] B. Balcerowicz: *Aktywność Polski w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa euroatlantyckiego*. W: Polityka zagraniczna Polski po wstąpieniu do NATO i do Unii Europejskiej. Problemy tożsamości i adaptacji. Red. S. Bieleń. Warszawa 2010, s. 136—137.

[626] R. Zięba: *Poszukiwanie międzynarodowej roli dla Polski — konceptualizacja roli państwa „średniej rangi*". W: Polityka zagraniczna Polski po wstąpieniu do NATO…, s. 61—63.

[627] Polskoamerykańskie stosunki dwustronne. Zob. http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/inne_kontynenty/ameryka_polnocna/stosunki_dwustronne_ameryka_pln/polsko_amerykanskie_stosunki_dwustronne [dostęp: 22.03.2014]

which are necessary from the point of view of both Poland and the USA[628].The Polish government, perceiving itself as a democracy promoter, has consistently sought to establish close cooperation with the United States to implement projects within the Eastern Partnership, established at the initiative of Poland and Sweden to strengthen ties between the European Union and Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine, and to accelerate reforms and consolidate democracy in these countries. Furthermore, the first session of the Polish-American Dialogue on Democracy took place in Warsaw on March 22, 2011. Its goal was to strengthen Polish-American cooperation in promoting good governance and democracy worldwide and to exchange views on the situation in countries striving for democracy, as well as those where democracy is threatened[629].The next session took place on May 8, 2012, in Washington, D.C.

Scientific cooperation also plays a significant role in Polish-American relations, with the legal basis being the Framework Agreement on Scientific Cooperation of 2006. Scientific exchange is carried out under the new agreement on the Polish-American Fulbright Commission, signed on March 10, 2008. Furthermore, the Polish-American Parliamentary Youth Exchange Program has been in operation since 2007. This program allows young people from Poland and the United States to study in public schools in the host country[630]. In March 2011, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on the development of cooperation in the field of scientific, technical and political aspects of clean and efficient energy technologies[631]. It is worth adding that in 2010, the Polish side officially accepted the US invitation to participate in the Global Shale Gas Initiative (GSGI), the aim of which was to support the administration in institutional and regulatory matters[632].

The goals of Polish policy towards the US therefore remain unquestionable and clearly defined. However, since 2007, following the change that occurred after the parliamentary elections in Poland, a certain shift in the emphasis of Polish foreign policy can be observed from a North American to a European one. The reasons for this state of affairs can be found in

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[628] M. Pisarski: *Stosunki ze Stanami Zjednoczonymi. W: Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej 2000*. Red. B. Wizimirska. Warszawa 2000, s. 105—106.

[629] A. Szeptycki: *Nowa odsłona polskiego mesjanizmu na Wschodzie*? W: Polityka zagraniczna Polski po wstąpieniu do NATO…, s. 288—293

[630] Polskoamerykańskie stosunki dwustronne. Zob. http://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/polityka_zagraniczna/inne_kontynenty/ ameryka_polnocna/stosunki_dwustronne_ameryka_pln/polsko_amerykanskie_stosunki_dwustronne [dostęp: 22.03.2014]

[631] Prezydenci Polski i USA we wspólnym oświadczeniu, 8 grudnia 2010 roku. Zob. http://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wizyty-zagraniczne/art,49,prezydenci-polski-i-usa-we-wspolnym-oswiadczeniu.html [dostęp: 18.03.2014]

[632] T. Pagucewicz: Polityka zagraniczna wobec Stanów Zjednoczonych. Zob. http://www.academia.edu/1823218/Polityka_zagraniczna_Polski_wobec_Stanow_Zjednoczonych [dostęp: 22.03.2014]

several areas. First, foreign policy has proven to be more pragmatic, balanced, and at the same time significantly less historical, resentful, and even emotional[633]. To advance Poland's national interest, it is essential to emphasize relations with European allies. We are a family with the European Union, while with the United States, we are more of a partnership. Most countries in the world consider their relations with the United States to be their most important foreign relations. However, it seems that our government has developed a formula for relations with the United States in which we know each other's work, can expect from each other, and what we can realistically achieve together. This formula benefits both us and the United States. We no longer expect the US president to bring gifts when he comes to Poland, but we also don't expect such a visit to be mind-boggling. We recognize the differences in our potential and are aware of our true importance to each other. Furthermore, the implications of political changes in Poland were certain reevaluations undertaken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, defining Poland's foreign policy priorities. In March 2012, when defining the priorities of Polish foreign policy for 2012-2016, the Minister of Foreign Affairs admitted that the European direction should play a key role in Polish policy, even though transatlantic relations and relations with the USA remain priorities in ensuring Poland's security.

In the document "Polish Foreign Policy Priorities 2012-2016," European policy based on three keywords—competitiveness, solidarity, and openness—was considered fundamental and discussed in detail first. The document further states that the United States plays a significant role in relations with Poland, both economically, politically, and in terms of security. Poland is committed to ensuring that these relations develop harmoniously and deliver tangible results. Therefore, maintaining close relations with the United States is equally important to the Polish authorities. Despite weakening due to the economic crisis and costly involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq, the United States will remain a key player in international security in the coming years[634].Barack Obama's foreign policy enjoyed significantly lower trust among the Polish public compared to his predecessor's. A 2011 poll conducted by World Public Opinion in 20 countries showed that only 47% of Polish respondents declared support for the US president, while in countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, and France, the figures ranged between 93% and 89%, respectively. In this case, it's arguable that after the military

[633] Tendencje do zmniejszania zaufania wobec polityki USA oraz dawania jej priorytetu można było obserwować nie tylko w Polsce, lecz także w innych państwach Europy Środkowej; Ch. Gati: Słabnące uczucie. W krajach Europy Środkowej kończy się miłość do Ameryki. „Sprawy Międzynarodowe" 2008, nr 4, s. 63—76.

[634] „Priorytety polskiej polityki zagranicznej 2012—2016". Warszawa 2012. Zob. http:// www.msz.gov.pl/resource/aa1c4aec-a52f -45a7 -96e5 -06658e73bb4e:JCR [dostęp: 19.03.2014].

operation in Iraq, disillusionment among Polish society and political elites arose, stemming from the White House's insufficient appreciation of Poland's role and involvement in the military operation. The lack of participation of Polish companies in the reconstruction of Iraq and the tightening of visa requirements for travelers to the US began to be viewed as evidence of naive messianism in Polish foreign policy in favor of an uncertain American ally[635]. Only 51% of Poles viewed the United States' global policy positively. However, somewhat surprisingly, Poles disagreed with the view that Washington uses its military power for political purposes. This view was held by 6 in 10 Poles[636].

It should be emphasized that the Barack Obama administration's foreign policy spheres of activity underwent a significant reassessment, shifting its attention and focus from Europe to Asia, particularly China, India, and Japan, as well as the North Korean nuclear program. The administration, originating from the Democratic Party, understood perfectly well that its priority was to meet the challenges of the growing military power of the People's Republic of China and its economic initiatives in the region, as well as to guarantee the security of its allies. Thus, the so-called "transpacifism" strategy, or Asian pivot[637] ("course towards Asia") meant that Poland could no longer maintain that it was one of the most important points of American policy in Europe. While the frequency of Polish-American political contacts in 2012 should be considered negligible, it is worth noting the increasing activity of American diplomats in the Asia-Pacific region[638].

The Barack Obama administration's policy towards Russia, as part of the so-called "reset," played a significant role in weakening Polish-American political relations. Barack Obama began his term with an undisguised determination to repair relations with the Russian Federation. He thus abandoned the confrontational rhetoric characteristic of the George W. Bush administration. On February 7, 2009, U.S. Vice President Joseph R. Biden, in a 25-minute speech at the 45th Munich Security Conference, emphasized the need for a fresh start in relations with Moscow. He used the phrase, which has since become popular, that it was time to "reset" Russian-American relations and that the White House wanted to "press the reset button"[639].

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[635] M. Wągrowska: Udział Polski w interwencji zbrojnej i misji stabilizacyjnej w Iraku. „Raporty i Analizy" 2004, nr 12, s. 1—5.

[636] Polska i USA — partnerstwo czy klientelizm? Stosunki polsko amerykańskie od 1989 roku. Zob. http://www.wszechnica.org.pl/repository/0109/polska_USA.pdf [dostęp: 20.03.2014]

[637] The Obama's Administration Pivot to Asia. Zob. http://www.foreignpolicyi.org/content/obama-administrations-pivot-asia [dostęp: 22.03.2014]

[638] Remarks by the President in the State of the Union Address. http://www.whitehouse.gov the -press -office/2013/02/12/remarks-president-state-union -address [data publikacji: 12.02.2013; dostęp: 22.03.2014]

[639] Remarks by Vice President Biden at the 45th Munich Security Conference. Hotel Bayerischer Hof Munich,

Poland, therefore, ceased to play such a significant role in U.S. policy, becoming merely one element in the path to improving U.S.-Russian relations. Therefore, if one were to examine Polish-American relations in the context of the entire Central and Eastern European subregion, one could conclude that the importance of the "new Europe," as Donald Rumsfeld termed it, significantly declined by the end of the first decade of the 21st century. Ben Rhodes, one of President Barack Obama's closest advisors and Deputy National Security Advisor to the President, in assessing the state of Polish-American relations in early 2014, emphasized that Poland had been and remains a close partner of the United States in the fight against terrorism, but much has changed since the September 11, 2001, attacks[640]. From Poland's perspective, despite its uncritical alignment with America's foreign policy strategy, many often highly sensitive issues in mutual relations remain unresolved. These are the main burdens on bilateral political relations and also directly or indirectly impact Poland's image on the international stage.

Poland, which since 1989 had strenuously sought to become a key ally of the United States in Central Europe, declined in importance during the Barack Obama administration. From Washington's perspective, American-Polish relations were not paramount to American interests in Europe. Poland is an important partner for the United States, but one among many. Relations with Southeast Asian countries remain a priority for the Democratic administration, and during the first term, relations with Moscow also remained dominant, with Poland merely being included in the mix. Political relations between Warsaw and Washington began to gradually cool in mid-2009, when the new Barack Obama administration disregarded the commemorations of the 70th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II. The Polish side clearly signaled the significance of this ceremony from a political and symbolic perspective, inviting the US president to the ceremonies. The US side, however, seemed unaware of the significance of these events for Poland, ultimately resulting in the delegation of only President Obama's national security advisor, James Jones, to the ceremony. International relations experts interpreted this situation as the beginning of a loss of US sensitivity to issues crucial to Central

Germany. Zob. http://germany.usembassy.gov/events/2009/feb-biden -security/ [data publikacji: 7.02.2013; dostęp: 28.03.2014]; C. Whitlock: 'Reset' Sought on Relations With Russia, Biden Says Speech at Security Conference Offers Look at Policy Goals. "Washington Post Foreign Service" 8.02.2009. Zob. http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article /2009/02/07/AR2009020700756.html [data publikacji: 8.02.2009; dostęp: 28.03.2014].

[640] R. Kuźniar: *Pozimnowojenne dwudziestolecie 1989—2010. Stosunki międzynarodowe na przełomie XX i XXI wieku*. Warszawa 2011, s. 418—422.

European countries. This proved to be a very accurate prediction for Barack Obama's entire term as US president[641].

In this context, two other groups of factors contributing to the cooling of Polish-American relations at the political level at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century can be identified: the visa issue for Poles and the secret CIA prisons in Poland. The quality of relations between Poland and the United States is therefore influenced, among other things, by the issue of visa waiver for Poles traveling to the US for business, scientific, and tourist purposes. This issue appears to be significantly burdening mutual relations, both among policymakers and the public. Discussions regarding its resolution have been ongoing for several years, but have remained unsuccessful. According to the Polish side, the US, as Poland's closest ally, should abolish visas, and Poland should be included in the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). Poland constantly emphasizes the fact that all EU member states (except Greece) are included in this program. For the American side, while not unequivocally rejecting this possibility, the high rate of visa rejections and violations of visa regulations by Poles remains significant. This is clearly confirmed by statistical data. The percentage of visa refusals in 2007 hovered around 25%. In the following years, it was 13.5% in 2008-2009, 9.8% in 2009-2010 (it fell below 10% for the first time in history), and 10.2% in 2010-2011[642].

In 2013, approximately 65,000 visa applications were submitted to the U.S. Embassy in Warsaw. Nearly 8,000 were denied, representing approximately 10.8% of all applications. Although the denial rate was lowered in 2008 from 10% to 3%, it still proved unfavorable for Poland[643].The easing of the eligibility criteria for countries to join the visa waiver program affected, among others, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Slovakia, Malta, and South Korea. The refusal rate in Poland reached 25% in 2007, which prevented Poland from being included in the program. Currently, the 3% refusal rate has been restored, but the U.S. Congress is working on a new version of the bill that will permanently establish a 10% refusal rate as a condition for visa waiver. However, Polish groups seem determined to win a change in the visa requirements for Polish citizens. The Polish American Leadership Political Action Committee (PAL—PAC) operates in the U.S.—an independent, nonpartisan political

[641] B. Wiśniewski: Polityka Polski wobec Stanów Zjednoczonych. W: Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej 2010. Warszawa 2010, s. 83—84.
[642] Coraz więcej Polaków ubiega się o wizy do USA, Amerykanie nie upraszczają procedury, Zob. http://tvn24bis.pl/informacje,187/coraz-wiecej-polakow-ubiega-sie-o-wizy-do-usa-amerykanie--nie -upraszczaja -procedury,385311.html [data publikacji: 7.01.2014; dostęp: 20.03.2014]
[643] MSZ: Polska wciąż nie spełnia kryteriów ws. zniesienia wiz do USA [depesza PAP z 3.04.2013]. Zob. https://www.msz.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/msz_w_mediach/msz__polska_wciaz_nie_spelnia kryteriow_ws__zniesienia_wiz_do_usa__depesza_pap_03_04_2013 [dostęp: 20.03.2014].

organization promoting issues important to Poles and Americans of Polish descent. Its activities, similar to those of the Polish American Association in Chicago, the largest Polish aid organization, also include lobbying on this issueTheir efforts are visible and appear to be bearing fruit. Recognizing the gravity of the problem, U.S. President Barack Obama declared in December 2010, in a conversation with the President of Poland, his intention to resolve the visa issue by the end of his term. The U.S. President reaffirmed these intentions during his visit to Poland in May 2011[644].Moreover, since March 2011, several bills aimed at modifying the operation of the VWP have been introduced in the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

These include the Secure Travel and Counterterrorism Partnership Program Act of 2011 (initiated by Republican Senator Mark Kirk and Democratic Congressmen Mike Quigley and Daniel Lipinski) and the Visa Waiver Program Enhanced Security and Reform Act, introduced by Senators Barbara Mikulski, Ben Cardin, and Mike Quigley (Democratic Party), and Republican Mark Kirk. Their work yielded tangible results in the initiation of the JOLT Act (The Jobs Originated through Launching Travel), which contains provisions related to the VWP consistent with previous bills but integrated into a larger legislative project aimed at promoting American tourism. This document was introduced in the House of Representatives on May 14, 2012, by Congressmen Mike Quigley, Heck, and Steve Chabot, and in the U.S. Senate on May 16, 2012, by Democratic Senator Charles Schumer. The JOLT Act emphasizes increasing the number of travelers to the United States through visa facilitation, which is intended to create new jobs. The bill includes a provision favorable to Poland that modifies the criteria for entry into the Visa Waiver Program[645]. Importantly, the JOLT Act bill has been officially endorsed by the White House and the State Department. It's worth noting that similar changes to the VWP program were also included, thanks to the support of both Democrats and Republicans, in the Department of Homeland Security's fiscal year 2014 budget bill. The bill was scheduled to be passed in July 2014 by the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee. Provisions favorable to Poland regarding the expansion of the visa waiver program were also included in the bill for general reform of U.S. immigration regulations. However, the bill, passed in the Senate at the end of June 2013, has not yet been taken up by the House of Representatives. It's worth noting, however, that Republicans, who hold the majority in the

[644] B. Wiśniewski: *Polska i Stany Zjednoczone: Odzyskując stracony czas*. W: Rocznik Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej 2011. Warszawa 2011, s. 107—122.
[645] H. R. 1354 — 113th Congress (2013—2014), H. R. 1354 — JOLT Act of 2013. Zob. http:// beta.congress.gov/bill/ 113th -congress/house-bill/1354 [dostęp: 25.03.2014]

lower house of Congress, have announced they will develop their own bill, as they themselves do not represent a coherent position on the visa waiver program[646].

The actions of the American legislature and executive are constantly monitored by the Polish authorities, who understand the gravity of the visa issue. The persistent visa asymmetry in EU-US relations is significant, yet discouraging from the perspective of Polish interests. This demonstrates the American authorities' application of double standards towards EU countries. As Bogusław Winid, Undersecretary of State in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland, rightly noted, the standards for denying visas to Poles remain largely biased. However, during the session of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on April 3, 2014, Bogusław Winid clearly emphasized that if the bill amending the visa-free regime in the US is actually passed and signed by President Barack Obama, and the visa application rejection rate is below 10%, Poland will be included in the visa-free program. Another issue significantly shaping Polish-US relations is the issue of CIA prisons located in Poland. After the events of September 11, 2001, Poland fully supported the war on terrorism. In early January 2014, the Washington Post reported that Polish intelligence received $15 million from the United States for providing Americans with access to the Stare Kiejkuty facility, which became probably the most important of the secret prisons where the CIA used controversial techniques (enhanced interrogation techniques)[647] widely criticized and considered torture (waterboarding or sleep deprivation) interrogated people detained due to their alleged terrorist activities[648].

The CIA prison in Poland, known as "Quartz," was supposed to be the first of these. Later, others were established in Romania, Lithuania, and Morocco. By the end of 2006, all CIA prisoners had been transferred to the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. It should be noted that the Polish prosecutor's office had already launched an investigation into alleged CIA prisons in Poland in 2008. The European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg is also examining complaints filed by Saudi Arabian Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri and Palestinian Abu Zubaida, who claim they were imprisoned by the CIA in Poland[649]. The issue of secret CIA

[646] Do końca roku sprawa zniesienia wiz dla Polaków powinna zostać załatwiona". Zob. http:// www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/do-konca-roku-sprawa-zniesienia-wiz-dla-polakow-powinna -zostac -zalatwiona,348813.html [data publikacji: 22.08.2013; dostęp: 20.03.2014].

[647] Program obejmujący kontrowersyjne techniki przesłuchań został ustanowiony przez CIA po zamachach terrorystycznych z 11 września 2001 roku. Jego zatwierdzenie wywołało bardzo burzliwą debatę zarówno w USA, jak i w innych państwach krytykujących amerykański unilateralizm. Po objęciu urzędu prezydenta przez Baracka Obamę, jedną z jego pierwszych decyzji, podjętych jeszcze w 2009 roku, było zakończenie programu. C. Johnson: Report On CIA Interrogation Tactics Revives Torture Debate. Zob. http://www.npr.org/blogs/itsal- lpolitics/2012/12/13/167058894/report-on -cia -interrogation-tactics -revives -torture-debate, [data publikacji:13.12.2012; dostęp: 20.03.2014]

[648] G.W. Bush: *Kluczowe decyzje*. Przeł. P. Pietrzak, W. Grzelczak. Warszawa 2011, s. 302303.

[649] Doradca Obamy: *Polska nadal jest naszym partnerem, ale od zamachu na WTC wiele się zmieniło*. Zob.

prisons in Poland divides both society and the political establishment. The key question remains the extent of this "self-servitude" toward the US, given that the Polish authorities, who have emphasized the protection of human rights for decades, approved such an initiative without informing the public and continue to avoid providing a clear answer to questions about it.

7.4.2. Polish-American Security Relations

Since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, relations between Poland and the United States have significantly intensified. The alliance between the two countries is based on a strategic military partnership, shared security interests in Central and Eastern Europe, and strong historical and emotional ties. A key pillar of contemporary relations is cooperation within NATO, the treatment of the United States as the primary guarantor of Polish security, and the convergence of geopolitical goals in the face of regional threats. However, in Poland, questions are increasingly emerging about the durability of American allied guarantees. Keeping partners in a state of uncertainty is a publicly declared and deliberately employed instrument by President Donald Trump to promote American interests. With Poland facing the threat of the Russian Federation, military cooperation with the United States and defense are among the priorities. It is worth noting that, after periodic adjustments, the number of American troops in mid-2026 stood at approximately 10,000. The United States Congress secured $1.15 trillion in funding in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This act includes restrictions on potential troop withdrawals from Europe and requires the Pentagon to analyze the effectiveness of permanent versus rotational bases. Poland is implementing major arms contracts (including Patriot systems, F-35 fighter jets, and Abrams tanks). In May 2026, agreements were finalized for American investments in Poland to repair and maintain Abrams tank engines. The U.S. administration (represented in the Ministry of Defense by Pete Hegseth) is conducting a six-month review of military presence in Europe. NATO including Poland, has received questionnaires assessing, among other things, US arms purchases and public support for Donald Trump's foreign policy, which, according to experts, is raising political dilemmas in Europe. US investment positions in Poland reach $10.7 billion. Energy transformation remains a key element of cooperation. In terms of contemporary cooperation and challenges, the established military alliance on the eastern flank is based on the rotational presence of US troops in Poland and permanent logistics bases, which constitute the main pillar of deterrence and security guarantees. The development of the relationship also encompasses technological

http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,15358565,Doradca_Obamy__Polska_nadal_jest_naszym_partnerem_.html [data publikacji: 30.01.2014; dostęp: 21.03.2014].

investments, the planned construction of a nuclear power plant, and raw material security. Contemporary Conditions of the Relationship (Current Status) The contemporary Polish-American partnership is based on three main dimensions:

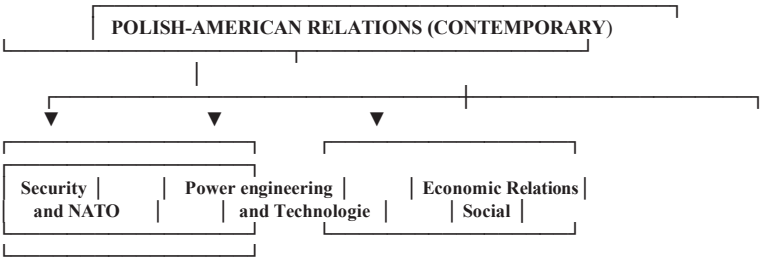


Fig. 8. Contemporary relations between Poland and the USA. Source: prepared by the authors

In the face of the aggressive policies of the Russian Federation and the full-scale war in Ukraine, Poland's role as a strategic logistics hub for NATO forces has rapidly expanded. US troops are stationed on Polish territory on a rotational and permanent basis (including the Forward Headquarters of the US Army's V Corps in Poznań – Camp Kościuszko). Poland is modernizing its army based on American technologies, purchasing the aforementioned Patriot systems, Abrams tanks, F-35 aircraft, and HIMARS launchers. Poland has selected the American company Westinghouse as a partner to build Poland's first nuclear power plant. Imports of American liquefied natural gas (LNG) through the terminal in Świnoujście have become crucial to Poland's independence from Russian energy resources. American corporations (e.g., Google, Microsoft, Intel) are locating their data centers and research and development bases in Poland. Since November 2019, Poland has been included in the Visa Waiver Program, which allows Poles to travel to the US visa-free for tourism and business purposes. Despite the change of governments in both Warsaw and Washington (Democratic and Republican administrations), the pro-American course of Polish foreign policy remains unchanged. The United States is a true military power in NATO, which in the foreseeable future may be able to effectively support the security of the Alliance's eastern flank in the event of an invasion from the east, and therefore can effectively deter such an invasion. U.S. military spending exceeds Russia's military spending by almost seven times[650], and even by more conservative measures of comparison, they exceed Russia's expenditures by more than twice,

[650] SIPRI Military Expenditure Database, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, https://www.sipri.org/databases/milex (dostęp: 14 lipca 2025 r.).

which in turn may exceed the total military expenditures of Europe[651]. At the same time, the US defense budget is 10 times larger than Germany's, 12 times larger than Great Britain's, 15 times larger than France's, and even almost twice as large as the combined value of defense spending of all other NATO member states[652]. Moreover, the United States possesses a vast technological and quantitative advantage in many domains crucial to the modern battlefield, such as nuclear forces, air power, missile defense, command and control, logistics, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance assets, including space.

The United States possesses 5,225 nuclear warheads, compared to France's 290 and the United Kingdom's 225[653]; 13,043 aircraft compared to 4,908 on the part of EU member states (excluding Poland, Cyprus and Malta) and 631 on the part of Great Britain; 4,640 tanks compared to a small number on the part of such key allies of Poland as Great Britain (227), France (215), Germany (296), Italy (197) and Spain (317)[654]. A former minister in Donald Trump's first administration noted, for example, that during his time in office, the budget for American veterans' care exceeded the combined defense budgets of Germany, Great Britain, and France. According to calculations by the International Institute for Strategic Studies, if the United States were to withdraw from NATO, the Alliance would have to spend an additional trillion dollars to compensate for the shortfall in its defense capabilities; not to mention that this process would take years, and it would be difficult to count on political acceptance of such a significant additional financial burden. We need sound and fruitful Euro-Atlantic cooperation. Today, Europe is not yet capable of ensuring its own security against resurgent Russian imperialism without the United States. Given the current, still low level of defense spending, relative to the Russian economy, which has returned to a war footing.

A prosperous and populous Europe undoubtedly possesses the potential to build a long-term deterrent to Russia. The war in Ukraine prompted European states to begin efforts in this direction, and the emerging Trump doctrine—leaving the Old Continent increasingly

[651] Por.: Global defence spending soars to new high, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 12 lutego 2025 r., https://www.iiss.org/online-analy- sis/military-balance/2025/02/global-defence-spending-soars-to-new-high/ (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.); Defence Spending and Procurement Trends, The International Institute for Strategic Studies, 12 lutego 2025 r., https://www.iiss.org/publications/the-military-balance/2025/defence-spending-and-procurement-trends/ (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

[652] Wyliczenia na podstawie danych NATO; por. Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2014–2024), https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2024/6/pdf/240617-def-exp-2024-en.pdf (dostęp: 14 lipca 2025 r.). Por. Global Power Index za 2025 r., www.globalfire-power.com

[653] Zob.: Nuclear Weapons: Who Has What at a Glance, Arms Control Association, styczeń 2025 r., https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nuclear-weapons-who-has-what--glance (dostęp: 7 maja 2025 r.). Rosja posiada 5580 głowic nuklearnych. Wielka Brytania nie posiada triady nuklearnej.

[654] Dla porównania Rosja posiada 4292 statki powietrzne i 5750 czołgi. Jeśli chodzi o czołgi, Szwecja posiada ich 1454, Grecja – 1388, Rumunia – 457, Finlandia – 200, Turcja – 2238, a Ukraina – 1114. Wszystkie wyliczenia na podstawie danych Global Power Index za 2025 r.

responsible for dealing with Moscow—further encourages these efforts to accelerate. A strong Europe, taking into account the Polish perspective and united in security against external threats, would undoubtedly be in Poland's interest.

The development of the closest possible relations with key European allies was hampered by the divergence of interests with some of them on matters fundamental to Polish security. These differences were particularly acute before the outbreak of the full-scale Russian-Ukrainian war in February 2022. In this context, it is difficult to overlook France's deeply rooted desire to redefine the cohesion of transatlantic alliance ties and Germany's deeply rooted ambivalence when it comes to building a special relationship with Russia—over the heads and against even the most vital security interests of Poland and other countries in the region. The list of unfavorable actions for Poland in this regard is long and was by no means the result of quixotic behavior on the part of its partners. It is enough to mention a few of them, e.g.: blocking the granting of a NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Ukraine in 2008, supplying Russia with high technologies and military equipment for years, hindering important processes strengthening NATO's eastern flank, introducing rickety sanctions after the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2014, excluding Poland from the Minsk Process, pushing forward the Nord Stream I and II projects, significantly limiting the supply of military equipment to Ukraine in 2022, maintaining the NATO-Russia Founding Act, etc.

Differences in defining national interests have also prevented the development of ambitious defense initiatives within the EU—ones focused on transatlantic complementarity. According to the European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP) adopted in 1999, the EU was supposed to have the capacity to deploy 60,000 troops within 60 days in civilian and military crisis operations by 2003 (this effort failed, though it was supposed to be an improvement over the 1993 Common Foreign and Security Policy). Meanwhile, Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), which, since 2017, has aimed to enable willing EU member states to jointly develop defense capabilities, invest in projects, and improve operational readiness, has resulted in low ambition and numerous fragmented, insignificant projects. Since 2007, the potential of the EU Battlegroups, i.e., rapid military reaction units consisting of 1,500 soldiers, ready to be deployed within 10 days, has also failed to be put into practice. There are more examples, but these alone should suffice to note that political declarations regarding the acquisition of EU capabilities have not translated into the acquisition of actual resources for many years.[655].

[655] Europejscy politycy zbyt często zapominają, że bezpieczeństwo i dobrobyt swoich państw zawdzięczają

In the context of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it's worth emphasizing the evolving approach of the EU and individual European partners towards Moscow. The EU provided genuine military, financial, and political support to the struggling Ukraine. The EUMAM training mission was launched, relatively strong sanctions were imposed on Russia, and Ukraine was offered the prospect of EU membership. A major process of strengthening the European defense industrial base is also underway. Consolidating such processes could open up unprecedented opportunities for the development of Poland's relations with European partners. In turn, an active and stronger Poland in Europe will be a welcome partner for the United States. From a Polish perspective, the credibility of allied guarantees from the US appeared stronger than those of key European allies – and not only because of the country's incomparably greater military potential. The United States played a crucial role in Poland regaining its independence after World War I, the defeat of Nazi Germany, the fall of communism, and the subsequent final recognition of the Polish-German border. It was thanks to cooperation with decision-makers in Washington that Poland was able to join NATO, which was de facto a condition for its subsequent accession to the European Union. After all, it was the Americans who—although often too laboriously from a Polish perspective—broke down the barriers to strengthening NATO's eastern flank. Even during Donald Trump's first presidency, when the language of transatlantic cooperation hardened, the US significantly strengthened Poland's security (for example, by imposing sanctions on the construction of the Nord Stream II gas pipeline and strengthening its military presence in Poland). The Americans also provided crucial support to Ukraine during Joe Biden's presidency.

Poles have long been, and remain, one of the most pro-American societies in Europe, as reflected in a number of recent public opinion polls. For example, in a Pew Research Center poll (June 2024), Poland ranked first among 34 countries in the world for the highest percentage of the population having a positive opinion of the United States (86%) and the lowest percentage having a negative opinion (10%). In a Gallup poll (January 2025), Poland ranked first among all NATO countries in public approval (72%) of the United States' leadership. Meanwhile, according to an ECFR poll (February 2025) covering 14 European countries, Poles were second only to the British in the percentage of the population who viewed the United States as an ally sharing common interests and values (rather than merely an indispensable strategic partner, rival, or adversary). According to the results of a Bartesmann Foundation survey (November 2024), as many as 65% of Poles consider the USA to be their most valuable

obecności i zaangażowaniu Stanów Zjednoczonych.

ally (compared to 55% of Spaniards, 54% of Germans, 50% of Dutch, 48% of French, 47% of Italians, 43% of Belgians and 51% of respondents from the EU), and only 40% of Poles answer positively to the question: "Over the last half-century, Europe and the United States have often cooperated closely; do you think it is time for the EU to go its own way?" (for comparison: EU – 63%, IT and ES – 65%, BE and FR – 64%, DE – 63%, NL – 54%). An Ipsos poll (April 2025) covering 29 countries showed that despite a 21% decline since October 2024, a majority of Poles (52%) still believe the US will have a positive impact on world affairs, the highest among the twelve European societies surveyed. Strong relations with the US – like our country's strong position in the region – strengthen Poland's position in Europe, thus increasing our influence on shaping the security architecture of the Old Continent.

Poland has become a reliable ally for the US thanks to practical actions – by strengthening its own security[656]. Between 2015 and 2024, Poland increased its annual defense spending in real terms by 159%, from 2.1% to 4.2% of GDP, the highest increase after Ukraine among the 40 countries that contribute the most to this purpose, and five times faster than the combined percentage of all NATO countries (+31%, to an average of 2.2% of GDP)[657]. The Polish budget for 2025 envisages defense spending at a record 4.7% of GDP. These measures allow for a rapid increase in the size and modernization of the Polish armed forces, and consequently, for the US to play an increasingly important role as an ally in NATO and the region.

Poland is not only strengthening its own defense capabilities but also exerting pressure on other European allies to follow its path. President Donald Trump expects all NATO member states to commit 5 percent of their GDP to defense. This type of Polish policy is consistent with the efforts of all subsequent White House administrations to persuade European allies to increase their defense efforts. Poland is strengthening Euro-Atlantic ties – despite voices promoting alternative concepts, such as European strategic autonomy. It is worth noting that

[656] „Zachowujemy się – z jednej strony – tak, jak gdyby nikt miał nie przyjść nam z pomocą, bo uważamy, że sami jesteśmy przede wszystkim odpowiedzialni za swoje bezpieczeństwo. Ale jesteśmy pewni dzisiaj naszych sojuszników w Sojuszu Północnoatlantyckim (…). O tym, że każda piędź ziemi Sojuszu będzie broniona. Ale uważamy, że przede wszystkim jesteśmy wiarygodnym sojusznikiem. I dlatego pokazujemy naszym sojusznikom, że sprawę bezpieczeństwa traktujemy odpowiedzialnie". Cytat za: Prezydent: Jesteśmy odpowiedzialni za swoje bezpieczeństwo, 3 września 2024 r., https://www.prezydent.pl/ aktualnosci/wypowiedzi-prezydenta-rp/wystapienia/prezydent-jestesmy-odpowiedzialni-za-swoje-bezpieczenstwo%2C90769?utm_source=chatgpt.com (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

[657] Trends in World Military Expenditure, 2024, SIPRI Fact Sheet, kwiecień 2025 r., https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2025–04/2504_fs_milex_2024.pdf#page=2 (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.). Podczas gdy w przypadku Polski wydatki te wzrosły o 159 proc., w przypadku USA wzrosły o 19 proc., DE +89 proc., UK +23 proc., FR +21 proc., IT + 45 proc., ES +35 proc., NL +111 proc., SE +113 proc., DK +154 proc., TR + 110 proc., Korei Płd + 30 proc., Japonii +49 proc., Izraela +135 proc., Chin +59 proc., Rosji +100 proc

the long-term credibility of this policy in Poland is guaranteed by full public support for it. Decision-makers in many other European capitals face more historical and social constraints in promoting strategic ties with the United States, which may cast doubt on their long-term sustainability and provide fuel for Russian propaganda. In Poland, the most significant source of anti-American resentment was the restrictions on visa-free travel for Polish citizens. Concepts began to spread in Poland, pointing to the capabilities of European allies to address threats from the east. Poland also proved to be a model ally in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. For years, the Polish government warned of the threat posed by the Russian Federation, undertaking appropriate preparations (e.g., achieving energy independence, including through the construction of the Świnoujście gas port and the Baltic Pipe pipeline). Poland demonstrated regional leadership by providing Ukraine with immediate assistance (political, military, logistical, and humanitarian), overcoming coalition partners' mental barriers regarding the provision of technology (such as modern aircraft and tanks), and pursuing predictable and pragmatic policies (such as a measured response to the Przewodowo incident and flexible cooperation on sanctions). Poland not only developed ways to strengthen allied cooperation but also engaged in effective military cooperation with the United States and other partners.

The most important practical dimension of the strategic partnership between Poland and the USA is the American military presence on the territory of the Republic of Poland[658]. Until the NATO Summit in Warsaw, this presence was symbolic. At the 2016 Warsaw Summit itself, the Alliance decided to establish allied battalion groups as part of the Alliance's Enhanced Forward Presence on NATO's eastern flank. In Poland, the United States assumed the role of framework nation for the emerging battalion group. In parallel with the allied action, the United States began maintaining a brigade-sized armored combat team (ABCT) in Poland on a bilateral basis, starting in January 2017. It's probably obvious how important the continued presence of US forces on Polish territory is for Poland's security. It should also be emphasized that immediately before the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war (February 24, 2022), the United States decided to strengthen its presence in Poland with another brigade, most of which was deployed in southeastern Poland near the Ukrainian border, including around Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport. This airport began to serve as the main hub for military support for Ukraine. At that time, the U.S. presence in Poland increased to approximately 10,000 troops. A significant area of Polish-American defense cooperation was missile defense. On November

[658] Zob. głosowanie Mike'a Johnsona nad pakietem dla Ukrainy i Izraela

13, 2024, the construction of the Aegis Ashore base in Redzikowo, Poland, was launched and completed, as part of the U.S. European Phased Adaptive Approach (EPAA) program.

To facilitate the American presence in Poland, both countries began negotiations on a new agreement regarding the status of U.S. forces in Poland. These talks resulted in a new Polish-American Enhanced Defense Cooperation Agreement, signed on August 15, 2020, by the Polish Minister of National Defense and the U.S. Secretary of State. The agreement provides preferential terms for the American contingent stationed in Poland. Poland assumed significant costs related to the maintenance and logistics of these forces. The U.S. is currently using this agreement as a model for negotiating similar agreements with other countries.

Polish-American cooperation in security and defense also has a modernization dimension. A number of programs for the development of the Polish Armed Forces are implemented in cooperation with American industry. This is confirmed by significant modernization purchases for the Polish Armed Forces (including F-16 and F-35 aircraft with associated weapons, Patriot air and missile defense systems, Apache helicopters, and Abrams tanks). Good relations with the US have accelerated these modernization processes. The presence of US forces in Poland, the new agreement on enhanced Defense Cooperation, and the modernization of the Polish Armed Forces based on US equipment and weaponry demonstrate that the US is becoming a significant guarantor of Poland's security. This presence acts as a deterrent, demonstrates the US's willingness to defend Poland in the event of a real threat, and contributes to the transformation of the Polish Armed Forces.

7.5. Future Challenges in Polish-American Relations

Although over the past decade the United States has identified meeting challenges in Asia as a strategic priority, this does not necessarily mean a reduction in Poland's role in the global system of US alliances. The country's global position may increasingly rely on its special relationships with strong, determined, and proven partners in specific regions of the world, and Poland has the opportunity to serve as such a key partner to an even broader extent than before. However, this requires commitment on the Polish side. A number of key dimensions can be identified that will shape the future relationship between Poland and the US, which are also, to a large extent, a leading theme in relations with the United States:

• The US administration is currently reviewing the US military presence worldwide. This review may culminate in decisions to somewhat reduce the US military presence in Europe and redeploy these forces to the Asia-Pacific region. Poland should strive for the broadest possible understanding of these issues in its contacts with the US administration maintaining

the presence of the US military in Poland and on NATO's eastern flank. It is on NATO's eastern flank that real threats to the security of countries located there exist, and the US presence has a particular deterrent effect in this regard. It is also an effective way to defend American interests in Europe;

• Maintaining the presence of the American military in Poland and on NATO's eastern flank. It is precisely on NATO's eastern flank that real threats to the security of countries located there exist, and the American presence has a particular deterrent effect in this regard. It is also an effective way to defend American interests in Europe.

• The Russian-Ukrainian war continues. Poland has supported Ukraine in its defense efforts since the beginning of this war. Poland should also strive to ensure that American support for Ukraine, which is fighting for its freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, continues.

• At the recent Summit in The Hague, NATO adopted a new financial commitment, demonstrating its willingness to increase defense spending to 5% of GDP by 2035. For the Donald Trump administration, credibility in this regard will be a litmus test, testing the seriousness of European countries' approach to security matters. Poland should continue to be a role model in this regard.

• Strengthening Poland's energy security requires consistency in implementing the construction of the first nuclear power plant in Poland based on American technologies. Poland should not cause delays in this program; The process of strengthening the Common Security and Defense Policy within the European Union is underway. Poland should strive to ensure that this process takes place in synergy with NATO and on the basis of cooperation with the United States. Since the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war, the commitment of the European Union and European partners to strengthening defense capabilities has significantly increased. This creates opportunities for Poland, but requires an even more active European policy.

Poland's position in relations with the United States depends on the strength of its relations with other partners – especially in Europe and the region. Therefore, in this context, Poland should also strive to maintain the strongest possible position in existing cooperation formats (especially in the EU, but also regionally), and build new formats (e.g., Nordic or even modernization formats with partners from the Global South). The potential of US relations with key partners in Europe should be realistically assessed and the closest possible cooperation should be pursued. Aside from top-level relations, Poland still has underdeveloped instruments of influence in the United States, which is particularly worrying given the existing threats to its

security and, relatively speaking, to many other countries. This applies to diplomatic resources, expert relationships, and the attributes of Polish-American cooperation. Outlining institutional ways to counteract this would require a separate study.

The longer-term horizon of cooperation and the need to build a strategic partnership with the United States that transcends political divisions should not be forgotten.

Between 2015 and 2026, relations between Poland and the United States were shaped not only by global processes, shared interests, and historical ties, but also by the strong personal influence of the political leaders at the helm of both countries. It's important to remember that even a decade ago, when discussing our mutual relations, we primarily referred to the shared values and historical solidarity. Today, we view them through the prism of very real areas of cooperation – military, armaments, technology, energy, infrastructure, and alliances. It is obvious that prioritizing the American agenda in foreign policy and pursuing these relations thoughtfully and consistently, regardless of changing political circumstances, is necessary. Continually strengthening the ties between Poland and the United States is the best guarantee of security. Nevertheless, maintaining the positive trend in Polish-American relations will require the efforts of the entire political class in Poland.

CONCLUSIONS

Relations with the United States are undoubtedly one of the priorities of Polish foreign and security policy. Since the period of political transformation, the United States has been viewed as Poland's main ally on the path to full democratization, securing guarantees of security and territorial integrity, and achieving independence from broadly defined Eastern influences. Throughout the final years of the Third Polish Republic, no member of the ruling party questioned the validity of rapprochement with the United States, maintaining close relations, or even treating the United States as Poland's strategic ally. However, discrepancies were observed regarding the degree to which Washington was treated as a strategic partner, in terms of the directions and involvement in Polish foreign policy. However, the policy of clientelism and self-vassalization consistently implemented between 1999 and 2007 failed to deliver results that met Polish expectations. On the contrary, since 2007, a process of political distancing in mutual relations has been progressing, accompanied by a shift in the United States' attention to Southeast Asia and improved relations with the Russian Federation, while in Polish politics, a focus on European affairs and Poland's immediate surroundings has shifted. Warsaw achieved no tangible benefits by engaging in operations in Iraq in the name of good relations with

the United States, agreeing to a secret CIA prison on its territory, supporting the war on terrorism, or participating in military missions in the Middle East and Central Asia. The American side offered Poland neither financial compensation nor favorable economic contracts, nor a solution to the long-and-unsuccessfully negotiated issue of visa waivers for Polish citizens traveling to the United States. Therefore, the Polish public rightly expressed considerable disappointment and discouragement at the Polish authorities' subservience to the United States. The strategy adopted by the Polish government has earned the nickname of the United States' Trojan Horse in Europe. In the following years, it was necessary to reassess Polish foreign policy priorities and seek allies in Europe, which posed a considerable challenge for those shaping the external dimension of the country's policy. It therefore seems reasonable to conclude that Central Europe, including Poland, is no longer treated as a strategic area by the White House. Considering the shifting role of the United States in Polish foreign policy, it is also safe to say that the center of gravity in Polish-American relations in the mid-2020 will shift from political cooperation to technological and investment cooperation, as evidenced by, among other things, the growing interest of American corporations in the modernization of the Polish military. However, the sphere of security and transatlantic relations will remain crucial, as Poland sees a military alliance with the United States and participation in NATO as the main guarantees of Polish national security.

CONCLUSION

In the current National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, approved by the President of the Republic of Poland on May 12, 2020, the strategic partnership with the United States is identified as one of the four external pillars of security, alongside NATO membership, EU membership, and regional cooperation. The Strategy also called for the implementation of activities to develop strategic cooperation with the United States of America, particularly in the areas of security and defense (including the permanent presence of the United States Armed Forces in Poland), technology, trade, and energy. The recommendations for the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, submitted by the President of the Republic of Poland to the government on July 4, 2024, similarly indicated that the strategic partnership with the United States remains a significant external pillar of Poland's security.

Summarizing the research and considerations conducted in this work, it should be noted that the analysis of the collected research material enabled a positive verification of the main research thesis, which assumed that: the effectiveness of Poland's security strategy is determined by the level of the state's military potential and the ability to integrate military, political, social, economic, technological, and information resources within a resilient, multi-domain security system capable of responding to cumulative and hybrid threats.

Taking into account the contemporary conditions of both the internal and external security environment and the evolving and Given the dynamically changing geopolitical situation impacting the international security architecture, it would be unjustified for Poland's security strategy to be based solely on traditional military defense, as it would be insufficient in the current combat environment. The national security system should consider the strategic resilience of the entire country. An effective Polish security strategy in the face of contemporary hybrid threats, such as migration pressures, cyberattacks, sabotage, and disinformation, must be based on a multi-domain approach and the concept of universal defense, which combines the following pillars:*militarny* and technological, consisting of modern missile systems, air defense, drones, and encompassing the development of the domestic arms sector and dual-use technologies;

- information and cyber – based on countering hostile psychological and sociotechnical operations and protecting critical infrastructure from cyberattacks;
- economic and energy, which focuses on diversifying raw material supplies, securing supply chains, and ensuring the financial stability of the state;

• social and political, consisting of strengthening public trust in public institutions, educating citizens on how to act in crisis situations, and building alliance cohesion within alliances with NATO and the EU.

Ensuring security is one of the fundamental and oldest functions of the state. The state implements these functions, among others, through an appropriate organizational structure, the primary goal of which is to defend and protect citizens and the state's borders. Within security policy, the following are distinguished: military security – defense policy in the strict sense – as well as energy, economic, commercial, and cyber security. Not only military devices operate based on digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, but also critical infrastructure, the protection of which is in the vital interest of the state and its citizens.[659]

Poland is committed to national security, striving to protect both the military and allied spheres. However, to achieve a fully acceptable level of security, it is necessary to balance these costs by strengthening civilian institutions and civil defense, as well as building the greatest possible resilience of the country's economic and information structures. Since 2022, since Russia's attack on Ukraine, and until the current war on our eastern border, Poland has accelerated the modernization of our armed forces. Furthermore, we are a member of NATO. It is our most important military alliance. Poland's defense strategy is largely based on this cooperation and allied solidarity stemming from Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (an attack on one NATO member state constitutes an attack on all member states). As part of this cooperation, soldiers from other countries, such as the United States, are stationed here, currently numbering between 8,500 and 10,000. This number is not static, as some units occasionally participate in exercises on NATO member states.

In the context of national security strategy and strengthening the military strength and resilience of our country, but also from the perspective of deterrence, it is worth emphasizing the importance of deploying allied forces, the vast majority of which are American, on Polish territory. For example, US troops are stationed in Redzikowo, where the missile defense base is located; an armored brigade combat group is located in Żagań; a combat aviation brigade is located in Powidz; unmanned aerial vehicles and a NATO air mission are stationed in Łask and Mirosławiec. Poznań is the headquarters of the US Army's V Corps, and Bemowo Piskie is the core of a NATO battalion combat group. In addition to American forces, there are approximately one thousand allies from other countries. Currently, the Polish Army has 73

[659] J. Szczepański, *Wstęp do nauki o polityce*, Warszawa 2018, s. 72–73.

aircraft in Poland and eight that are still in the US, and pilots who will train our pilots at the controls in the future are undergoing training on them F-35A.

Over the next four years, the protection of our airspace will be even better. In total, by 2030, we are expected to have 127 aircraft. It is important to emphasize that Poland has undergone a revolution in building not only the capabilities of our air force but also those of other branches of the armed forces, and cooperation between Poland and the United States is crucial to Poland's security. This fact is consistently emphasized in Poland's most important strategic documents, including successive National Security Strategies of the Republic of Poland. Defense cooperation with the US has resulted in a strengthened US military presence in Poland. Poland is becoming the center of the US presence in the region, which increases the credibility of the entire allied deterrence and defense posture on the eastern flank. Cooperation with the US also has a trade and energy dimension – both are crucial to ensuring the further development of Poland and maintaining the competitiveness of the Polish economy. At the same time, the Recommendations recommended continuing the development of strategic cooperation with the US, aimed at consolidating American commitment to European security, including the expansion of a permanent US military presence in Poland. At the same time, Polish-American cooperation should be deepened in the areas of technology, trade, and energy.[660].

Strengthening Poland's alliance ties with the US aims to utilize all available instruments to promote Polish interests, rather than limiting itself to the conclusions of a single school of thought, such as realism, constructivism, or liberal institutionalism. Poland serves as a model ally for the United States, effectively striving to increase the US presence and military capabilities in Poland. Poland is making efforts to anchor US economic interests in Poland, strengthening political ties, and developing a strategic partnership regardless of who has held or currently holds the highest office in the White House – Barack Obama, Joe Biden, or Donald Trump. It should be emphasized, however, that Donald Trump's first term as president of the US was a fruitful period in the development of mutual relations. During this period, a number of meetings between the presidents in both Poland and the US should be noted, which yielded tangible results. During the US president's visit to Poland in July 2017, both presidents held bilateral talks and participated in the Three Seas Initiative summit, which was held in Warsaw

[660] Rekomendacje zostały udostępnione na oficjalnej stronie BBN: Rekomendacje do Strategii Bezpieczeństwa Nawww.bbn.gov.pl/pl/wydarzenia/9927,Rekomendacje-do-Strategii-Bezpieczenstwa- -Narodowego-Rzeczypospolitej-Polskiej.html (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

at the time. During this visit, the US president gave a public speech at Krasiński Square in Warsaw, which was positively received by our society[661].

The next bilateral meeting between the two presidents in Washington, D.C., in September 2018 was particularly significant. During the Polish President's visit to the U.S. capital, a joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership between Poland and the United States was signed. The title of the declaration itself indicates the main goals guiding Polish-American cooperation: "Defending Freedom and Building Prosperity Through the Polish-American Strategic Partnership." This is actually the first document in which both countries jointly declare that they view their mutual cooperation through the prism of a strategic partnership. The document addressed the development of cooperation in three areas: security and defense; energy; and trade, investment, research, and innovation.[662].

During the next visit of the President of the Republic of Poland to the USA in June 2019, another declaration was signed: "Joint Declaration of the Presidents on Defense Cooperation Regarding the Presence of U.S. Armed Forces on the Territory of the Republic of Poland", which referred to plans to increase the U.S. military presence in Poland by approximately 1,000 soldiers and to establish the American Forward Divisional Command in Poland, which was later established as the permanent Forward Command Post of the V Corps in Poznań[663]. During this visit, immediately after the talks at the White House, the American side organized a flyover of F-35 aircraft over the White House. Also during the United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2019, the presidents met in Washington, where they signed another declaration dedicated to the development of defense cooperation between the two countries: "Joint Declaration of the Presidents of Poland and the United States on Deepening Defense Cooperation"[664]. The two presidents also met at the White House in June 2020. During this meeting, they signed a joint statement in which they emphasized that "Poland and the United States will continue to deepen defense cooperation, including through further

[661] Informacja na temat wizyty prezydenta Donalda Trumpa w Warszawie: Donald Trump: Nigdy nie byliśmy bliżsi Polski, niż w tej chwili, 6 lipca 2017 r., https://www. prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/spotkanie-prezydentow-polski-i-usa-,647 (dostęp:10 lipca 2025 r.)

[662] *Wspólna deklaracja o polsko-amerykańskim partnerstwie strategicznym, 18 września 2018 r.*, https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/prezydenci-polski-i-usa-podpisali-wspolna-deklaracje-o partnerstwie-strategicznym,1108 (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

[663] *Wspólna Deklaracja Prezydentów o Współpracy Obronnej w zakresie obecności sił zbrojnych USA na terytorium RP*, 12 czerwca 2019 r., https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarzenia/wspolna-deklaracja-prezydentow-o-wspolpracy-obronnej-w-zakresie-obecnosci-sil-zbrojnych-usa-na-terytorium-rp-plen,1411 (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

[664] *Wspólna deklaracja Prezydentów PL i USA na temat pogłębiania współpracy obronnej, 23 września 2019 r.*, https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wydarze- nia/wspolna-deklaracja-na-temat-poglebiania-wspolpracy-obronnej,1512 (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.)

implementation of the Joint Declarations of June 12, 2019, and September 23, 2019, as well as by developing plans to strengthen military ties"[665].

It is worth mentioning that Joe Biden has visited Poland twice during his presidency. Both took place in the shadow of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022. During the first visit, both presidents held bilateral talks in Warsaw and also met with American soldiers serving in Rzeszów. During this visit, Joe Biden also delivered a speech at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, where he reaffirmed the importance of the obligations arising from Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. He stated very clearly that as the United States, "we have a sacred obligation under Article 5 to defend every inch of NATO territory with the full force of our collective might"[666].

President Biden also visited Poland in 2023, on the first anniversary of the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Both presidents held bilateral talks. Additionally, the US President, together with the NATO Secretary General, attended the Bucharest Nine summit in Warsaw. The joint participation of the President of the Republic of Poland and the Prime Minister in the meeting with President Biden is noteworthy. This signaled unity on security matters among all the major political forces in Poland. The date of the visit itself was also significant: the 25th anniversary of Poland's accession to NATO. In the face of growing threats to military security, Poland is gradually increasing its defense spending. In 2023, the military budget amounted to €21 billion, representing 3% of GDP, and in 2026, the budget is expected to increase to 4.7% of GDP, due to the announced numerous arms purchases from NATO allies, South Korea, and also from the Polish defense industry. According to a report by Credit Agricole, Poland's total national defense spending by 2035 in the changing security architecture of Central and Eastern Europe could reach an astronomical PLN 1.7 trillion, with arms purchases in the region of PLN 600 billion. However, if the economy does not recover, maintaining such enormous defense spending will be very difficult. It should be noted, however, that the military potential of the Polish army is being depleted as a result of the successive transfer of military aid to Ukraine.

At the same time, Russia's overt aggression has contributed to strengthening NATO's solidarity and readiness, led by the US as the main guarantor of the security of Euro-Atlantic

[665] Por. treść oświadczenia: *Wspólne oświadczenie Prezydentów Andrzeja Dudy i Donalda J. Trumpa, 24 czerwca 2020 r.*, https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wypowiedzi- -prezydenta rp/wystapienia/oswiadczenie-pad-potus,4298 (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.). Z prezydentem Barackiem Obamą polski prezydent spotkał się na marginesie spotkań w szerszych formatach: 28 września 2015 r. w Nowym Jorku, 31 marca 2016 r. w Białym Domu i 8 lipca 2016 r. w Warszawie

[666] Zob.: Joe Biden: „*Siła wielu jest większa niż wola jednego dyktatora*". Pełny tekst wystąpienia na Zamku Królewskim, 27 marca 2022 r., https://wiadomosci.onet.pl/kraj/joe-biden-pelny-tekst-wystapienia-na-zamku-krolewskim/7eemr6b (dostęp: 10 lipca 2025 r.).

community states within the collective security system. This has resulted in a strengthened NATO presence on the Alliance's eastern flank. Furthermore, the revealed nature of the war in Ukraine has highlighted Poland's needs in terms of resources necessary for ensuring military security. Meanwhile, the deterioration of the security environment implies regional cooperation among CEE countries, which individually are unable to address both regional and global threats to the existing international order. Poland's security and position also depend largely on how effectively we are able to achieve synergy and coordinate actions with our neighbors and regional allies, both in Central and Eastern Europe and those located to the west of our border.

The intensifying rivalry among participants in international relations leads to increasing tensions motivated by growing concerns about their own security. These factors trigger a process of a greater arms race and tensions in international relations, contributing to a decline in international security, revealing the so-called security dilemma. Furthermore, the military conflict between Russia and Ukraine significantly undermines other components of the security system (political, economic, social, energy, ecological, and demographic security), the manifestations of which are becoming real challenges and threats to Poland's national security. At the same time, as Ukraine's ongoing struggle against the Russian invader demonstrates, war poses the greatest threat to security, the functioning of the state, and the lives and health of people. Given these dynamically changing conditions affecting the geostrategic situation in Europe and globally, it is essential to update the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, published in 2020. Systematic updating of the security strategy and the introduction of adjustments are essential for a correct diagnosis of challenges and a reliable assessment of the constantly evolving catalog of threats to Poland's security environment.

The analyses conducted in this work enabled us to answer the main research question.

Main research question:

To what extent does Poland's contemporary security strategy respond to the nature and dynamics of the evolving catalogue of current threats, and what changes are necessary to increase the country's strategic resilience?

Answer: Russia's aggression against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, constitutes a turning point, triggering a rapid deterioration in Poland's security as a frontline state. It should be emphasized that it is precisely in this context that Poland's contemporary security strategy responds only moderately to the nature and dynamics of threats. This thesis is supported by the fact that Poland's adopted security strategy demonstrates high adequacy in the military

and procurement dimensions, while remaining lagging behind in the formal, doctrinal, and civilian spheres. First, in terms of the doctrinal and formal dimensions, there is a legislative delay. Official strategic documents are lagging behind geopolitical dynamics. Work on the new National Security Strategy (NSS), which is intended to replace the 2020 version (predating Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine), is still ongoing. Although the current government adopted the project in July 2025, the final signature of the president was missing for a long time due to jurisdictional and procedural disputes, it was only in the first half of 2026 that the National Security Bureau developed a coherent version of the document, agreed upon between the government and the president, which will align the state's goals in conditions of persistent regional instability. However, it should be emphasized that to date (August 31, 2026), this has not yet been done.

Secondly, regarding the military and deterrence dimension of defense, it should be emphasized that Poland's response to the dynamic threats posed by the Russian Federation is decisive. The military response is based on two pillars:

• technical modernization through the implementation of the Polish Armed Forces Development Program for 2025–2039 and unprecedented military spending of 4.7% of GDP, which positions our country high among NATO countries;

• International alliances - the Strategy thoroughly integrates Poland's defense with NATO's deterrence system and further strengthens bilateral military cooperation with the United States.

Third, regarding asymmetric and hybrid threats, Poland's contemporary security strategy is moderately adequate to the dynamics of contemporary threats, which have evolved toward actions below the threshold of war (below Article 5 of the NATO Treaty), which has necessitated a partial adjustment of the strategy and the consideration of:

• border pressure and sabotage - actions on the border with Belarus, as well as acts of sabotage and cognitive warfare, have been incorporated into the services' ongoing operations;

• definitional deficiencies - Military experts point out that Polish legislation and strategy still do not define hybrid warfare precisely enough, which hinders the efficient response of state institutions to non-military incidents. Fourth, regarding the non-military component of civil defense and societal resilience, it must be acknowledged that the greatest discrepancy exists here between the dynamics of threats and Poland's actual security strategy.

Security experts emphasize catastrophic underdevelopment in areas such as:

• protective infrastructure - serious deficiencies in shelter networks, crisis communication systems, and ventilation systems;

• civil defense - lack of a coherent, implemented crisis management system that would engage the entire society, modeled, for example, on Scandinavian solutions based on total defense. This situation demonstrates a failure to draw the appropriate conclusions from the war in Ukraine.

To increase the state's strategic resilience in the context of the Russian Federation's war with Ukraine, comprehensive systemic reform is recommended, combining military modernization with building the resilience of society, administration, and the economy. The lessons from the ongoing conflict demonstrate that modern defense relies not solely on the military, but on the entire state's ability to survive in conditions of constant threat.

Necessary changes must be made in key areas, such as:

- civil protection and reconstruction of civil defense – it is necessary to implement new legislation and organizational changes to the civil defense system. Key in this area is the construction and registration of shelters, as well as widespread citizen training in first aid and emergency response;
- decentralization and strengthening of local governments – Ukrainian experience has shown that strong, independent local governments are able to most effectively manage crises, skillfully organize logistics, and protect the public when central authorities and institutions are overloaded;
- industrial autonomy and supply chain resilience – in preparing for the imminent threat of military attack, it is necessary to increase defense industry production and diversify supply sources of key components, such as ammunition and microprocessors, as well as increase strategic reserves of raw materials, medical supplies, and food;
- cybersecurity and critical infrastructure protection – the state should systematically increase its defensive capabilities in cyberspace, protecting energy networks, banking systems, and water supply systems from destruction. Physical and electronic protection of strategic entities against missile and drone attacks is also crucial.
- combating disinformation and building social resilience – monitoring and neutralizing psychological operations and information warfare waged by the Russian Federation

is also crucial. Media education of citizens should also be pursued, which should become a component of the national security system;

- combating corruption and ensuring transparency in public structures – all manifestations of bureaucratic dysfunction and corruption, which directly impact the effectiveness of the security system, must be vigorously eliminated. Polish intelligence services should detect and prevent hostile intelligence from infiltrating state institutions and sabotaging procurement procedures;
- Integrated planning and updating of doctrines – close cooperation and harmonization of military and civilian administration operations are essential – coherent and coordinated crisis management, as well as systematic updating and adaptation of the National Security Strategy to the evolving battlefield and hybrid attacks.

The research material collected and analyzed in this work also enabled us to answer the specific research questions posed in this work:

Specific research questions:

1. How did Poland's security strategy evolve after 1989?

Answer: Poland's security strategy after 1989 evolved from a search for independence and sovereignty, through exiting the Soviet sphere of influence and deep integration with the West, and emphasizing strong national defense and deterrence, given the threat to Poland's national security posed by resurgent Russian imperialism. Several key stages can be identified in this evolutionary process:

• **The period of transformation and efforts to join NATO (1989–1998)** - the end of the Warsaw Pact: After the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, the priority was to remove Soviet troops from Polish territory and achieve full sovereignty. In 1992, the Assumptions of Polish Security Policy were adopted, based on the concept of defense independence and establishing diplomatic relations with other countries. The most important goal was to obtain NATO membership, which was considered a fundamental guarantee of military security.

• **Joining Western structures and participating in expeditionary missions: 1999–2013** - on March 12, 1999, Poland was officially admitted to NATO, and on May 1, 2004, to the European Union. This was a breakthrough moment – Poland's security was based on collective defense (Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty). As part of allied solidarity, Poland engaged in missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The strategy was based on building expeditionary and stabilization

capabilities. Poland's National Security Strategy of 2000 and 2007 took into account asymmetric threats and international terrorism.

• **2014-2021 period – Poland's primary strategic goal was territorial defense** – the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 was the impetus for Poland and the Alliance to return to classic deterrence and territorial defense. Poland's new National Security Strategy, adopted on May 12, 2020, identified the Russian Federation as the main threat to Poland's security and regional stability and introduced the concept of national resilience, including cyberspace and information security.

• **Post-Russian Armed Aggression – Strengthening Deterrence** - Russia launched an armed attack on Ukraine on February 24, 2020, which contributed to the acceleration of the modernization of the Polish Armed Forces and a significant increase in defense spending to 4.7% of GDP. Moreover, the new strategic documents place a strong emphasis not only on building a common defence system, but also on strengthening cooperation within NATO's eastern flank and strongly linking our country's defence capabilities with EU defence support instruments.

2. What factors most significantly shape Poland's contemporary security environment?

Answer: Among the factors that have a fundamental impact on Poland's contemporary security environment, the most dangerous are the aggressive policies of the Russian Federation and the war in Ukraine, which have not only destabilized the Central and Eastern European region but also influenced the transformation of the global security architecture. Other key factors determining the level of our country's security include:

• Military and hybrid threats: Poland is a frontline state located in the immediate vicinity of the ongoing war between the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Furthermore, the ongoing militarization of the Königsberg Oblast and Belarus, as well as migration pressure on the Polish-Belarusian border, constitute elements of hybrid warfare.

• Poland's membership in NATO and the European Union provides security guarantees for our country based on Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Furthermore, the deployment of allied forces on Polish territory constitutes the foundation of the deterrence system.

• Technical modernization of the Polish Armed Forces – an unprecedented increase in defense spending in Poland, amounting to 4.7% of GDP, and large-scale purchases of modern weapons, such as Patriot systems, F-35 aircraft, Abrams tanks, and K2 tanks.

• Energy and raw material security – based on the process of reducing dependence on Russian raw material supplies. In addition, investments in infrastructure development, such as the Baltic Pipe or the gas port in Świnoujście, as well as the transformation towards nuclear and renewable energy.

• Cyber threats and disinformation – these are attacks on critical IT infrastructure and media propaganda campaigns aimed at antagonizing and polarizing society and undermining trust in state institutions and our allies.

3. How has the nature of threats to national security changed?

Answer: The nature of threats to national security has evolved from classic, predictable, symmetrical armed conflicts to multidimensional, continuous, and unpredictable competition.

• Hybridity and asymmetry – contemporary conflicts rarely rely solely on open conventional warfare. They are characterized by a combination of military and non-military actions, such as border provocations, economic blackmail, and disinformation campaigns.

• Digital dimension and cyberspace – cyberattacks on key critical infrastructure, such as energy, finance, banking, and administration, are a fundamental tool for paralyzing the functioning of state institutions without the use of military force.

• Blurring the line between war and peace – actions disrupting the smooth functioning of the state are conducted below the threshold of war or officially declared armed conflict, significantly complicating a rapid and decisive international legal response.

• Globalization and transnationalism – contemporary threats to the security environment, such as terrorism, organized economic crime, and pandemics, know no national borders in a globalized world.

4. Is the Polish security system prepared to respond to multi-domain threats?

Answer: Currently, the Polish security system is undergoing a profound transformation and is building real capabilities to respond to multi-domain threats (MDO – Multi-Domain Operations), which means it is partially prepared. Full readiness will be achieved in the coming years. The conditions of the modern battlefield require the full integration of operations across the air, land, sea, cyber, and space domains.

• **Strategy and doctrine** – activities related to multi-domain operations have been included as one of the main long-term goals in the Polish Armed Forces Development Program for 2025–2039. Work is currently underway to update systemic legal acts, including those concerning the

introduction of a state of full war readiness, which will improve the cooperation between civilian and military structures.

• **Command and Communications Systems (C5ISR**) – Poland is currently implementing modern, automated command support systems designed to combine sensors and effectors into a single, synchronized system. The Operational Command of the Polish Armed Forces (RFA) systematically conducts tests to validate the architecture for tactical data exchange between land, air, and naval platforms.

• **Cyber and Space Domain – The Cyber Defense Force (CDF)** plays a key role in building and increasing resilience to everyday cyberattacks. New strategies are based on close cooperation between the military and civilian sectors, while national satellite reconnaissance capabilities are being developed. Modern Equipment and Integration – The goal of purchasing modern equipment and hardware, such as Patriot air defense systems, F-35 fighter jets, Abrams tanks, and Apache helicopters, is their network-centric integration, which involves the rapid exchange of information between them in real time.

5. To what extent do NATO and the EU strengthen Poland's strategic capabilities?

Answer: NATO and the European Union constitute the foundation of Poland's national security, strengthening our country's strategic capabilities by combining efforts to develop military potential and increase infrastructure resilience. Both NATO and the European Union, together with Poland, are implementing programs that reshape and strengthen our country's geopolitical position in a strategic context. The North Atlantic Alliance is the foundation of Poland's collective military defense, influencing strategic capabilities in key areas.

• **Operational plans and forward defense** - in accordance with NATO's adopted strategy,

the assumption is to defend every inch of allied land. Alliance plans have precisely defined affiliations to specific territories. In Poland's case, this means an immediate retaliatory strike in the event of an attack and blocking the attacker directly at the border.

• **Strengthening presence and interoperability** - not only the presence of international forces within the so-called Forward presence, but also the existence of command structures on Polish territory, which require continuous integration of the procedures and communication systems of the Polish Armed Forces with Allied forces;

• **Reconnaissance and technology** - it is very important for Poland to have a system based on constant access to strategic intelligence data of the Alliance, including early warning systems

(AWACS) and strengthening the security and resilience of our country through the use of collective anti-aircraft and anti-missile defense. • Support and strengthening of defense capabilities by the European Union - it is worth emphasizing that NATO takes primary responsibility for military operations, while the European Union focuses its efforts primarily on removing administrative barriers, logistics, and financing the defense industry.

• **Military Mobility** - Poland benefits from a flagship European Union project, supported by the Connecting Europe Facility. This project finances the modernization of roads and bridges, railway infrastructure, and airports in Poland. The project aims to adapt the national infrastructure to the movement of heavy military equipment to bases located on the eastern flank. Simultaneously, it is implementing so-called Military Schengen procedures, which aim to optimally shorten the time required to issue permits for cross-border transport of allied forces to a maximum of two days.

• **Strengthening Poland's strategic capabilities** - the basis for this is financing research and development of the Polish defense industry. Poland is an active participant in EU programs such as PESCO (Permanent Structured Cooperation) and EDF (European Defense Fund). This allows Polish defense companies and research institutions to participate in international supply chains and the transfer of modern technologies. It's worth noting that EU programs enable NATO member states to undertake significant defense investments, for example, by granting preferential loans for joint arms purchases, and by exempting some military spending from stringent sanctions for excessive budget deficits.

When analyzing the scope of NATO and the European Union's expansion of Poland's strategic defense capabilities, it is impossible to overestimate, let alone overestimate, the importance of programs that support equipment and weapons purchases in Poland. One of the most important programs financed from EU funds for arms purchases is the SAFE (Security Action for Europe) Program. In Polish legal terminology, it is called the Financial Instrument for Enhancing Security SAFE (FIZB). SAFE is an EU financial instrument offering member states long-term, low-interest loans for modernizing their defense capabilities. SAFE's primary purpose is to finance air defense, artillery systems, ammunition, drones, and cyberspace. The total budget allocated to EU member states is €150 billion. It should be noted that Poland is the largest beneficiary of this program, and the Polish government has already contracted approximately €44 billion for arms purchases. Emphasizing the fundamental and strategic importance of NATO and European Union support for increasing our country's defense capabilities, it should be noted that the Alliance, in its military dimension, provides Poland with

doctrine, command structures, and, above all, security guarantees, while the European Union, by building the civilian and economic dimension, simultaneously strengthens our country's resilience, modernizes the logistics infrastructure, and revitalizes and stimulates the Polish defense sector.

In summary, the challenges facing the Polish national security strategy must be considered. One such challenge is the need to integrate systems, including: crisis management, critical infrastructure protection, civil defense, and a system for building societal resilience to disinformation and cyber threats. Among the most important challenges reducing the effectiveness of the national security system are:

• internal disputes that weaken the state's institutional stability, which is explicitly noted by strategic analyses, which perceive this as a factor facilitating external interference and hybrid operations;

• translating the provisions of general security strategies into specific legal acts and the lengthy procedures of central and local government administration. New recommendations and updates to strategic documents emphasize the need for better integration of state management systems in both peacetime and crisis;

• implementation time – shifting from the traditional, departmental division of activities to a multi-domain approach requires deeper structural changes, as well as mental changes and extensive training;

• Interoperability – Although Polish systems are already integrated with NATO structures, comprehensive integration of older equipment with equipment based on the latest technologies, as well as ensuring interference-resistant communications, is still a process that requires considerable time.

Summarizing the considerations regarding increasing the potential and modernization of the Polish Army, it should be emphasized that these actions are fully justified both in view of the current situation related to the threat of a spillover of armed conflict beyond our eastern border, and in the longer term, when global and regional conflicts and threats to Poland's broadly understood military security may emerge. The task and challenge for the government will be the stable financing of the growing armed forces and their military potential, while fully utilizing and increasing the potential of the Polish defense industry. After regaining political independence following the collapse of the Soviet bloc in 1989–1991, Poland, despite some momentary vacillations during this period, declared its clear intention to base its military

and economic security on participation in NATO and the EEC. Following the collapse of the USSR, Poland became a neighbor of new states – Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus – with which it often shared dramatic fates.

In the face of these difficult historical experiences in relations with the political regimes operating in these countries, Poland, through membership in the Alliance, wanted to protect its security, especially in the face of potential instability and threats coming from beyond the eastern border, and to clearly signal its participation in the Western zone of security and democracy, from which it was brutally separated despite the sacrifices and military effort incurred during World War II.[667]. State security policy is shaped by state bodies responsible for its implementation based on the constitution, and is then defined and developed by analytical and expert units of government institutions and agencies. Such activities and documents are also developed in Poland. In 2010–2012, the Strategic Review of the National Security of the Republic of Poland was conducted, culminating in the publication of the White Paper on National Security of the Republic of Poland in 2013. This document served as the basis for the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland, prepared in 2014. Furthermore, in 2016, a Strategic Defense Review was conducted, the results of which were published publicly in the document "Defense Concept of the Republic of Poland."[668].

All of these documents, particularly those issued after 2014—the Russian annexation of Crimea and the instigation of the conflict in Donbas—present the position that Russia's aggressive policies and actions pose a threat to the security not only of Poland but also of the entire Central European region. Therefore, it is necessary to both increase its own military potential and seek international support to effectively secure the region, particularly by strengthening NATO's eastern flank.[669].

The currently applicable 2020 National Security Strategy recognizes the pillars of Poland's national security as safeguarding independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and ensuring the security of the state and its citizens, which should be the result of solidarity-based cooperation between states and respect for international law. The foundation of military

[667] J. Czaputowicz, *Ewolucja polskiej polityki bezpieczeństwa: w kierunku strategicznej samodzielności*?, „Studia Politologiczne" 2014, vol. 34, s. 16.
[668] T. Smura, B. Kot, *Wielka Brytania w świecie rywalizacji wielkich mocarstw – zintegrowany przegląd bezpieczeństwa i jego znaczenie dla Polski oraz Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej*, Warszawa 2021, https:// pulaski.pl/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Raport_2021_czerwiec_wielka_brytania_online.pdf [dostęp: 11 stycznia 2023]
[669] A. Legucka, *Poland [w:] Understanding strategic adaptations: Security strategies and policies after 2014*, red. H. Maksak, R.Q. Turcsanyi, M. Vorotnyuk, Bratysława–Kijów 2018, s. 119 i n.

security is the armed forces, whose potential is to serve not only defense but also deter potential external enemies by increasing the size, mobility, and modernization of the Polish military's armament. This own military potential, however, is to be an element of the functioning polish soldiers within the world's strongest military alliance, NATO, whose primary mission is deterrence and collective defense in the event of an attack on Poland or another member state. Bilaterally, Poland's most important partner in security and defense is the United States, and the development of this strategic cooperation involves maintaining the permanent presence of US armed forces in Poland, acquiring modern weapons (Patriot air and missile defense systems, HIMARS rocket artillery, armored vehicles such as Abrams tanks and the latest generation F35 aircraft), as well as technological cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. The position of the vast majority of decision-makers and researchers of security issues is that the occurrence of the Ukrainian-Russian conflict has worsened the level of Poland's security, although at the same time it has drawn the attention of Polish decision-makers to the need to strengthen the Polish defense potential by making the use of NATO's potential more realistic and through their own actions in this area, such as increasing military spending and purchasing weapons for deterrence, and if necessary, also to repel the aggressor.

For Poland, according to successive national security strategies, the main threat is Russia and its aggressive, neo-imperial policies and military and hybrid activities, as well as ideological and civilizational rivalry with the West. Therefore, Poland declared its aspiration to belong to the Western civilizational community, human rights, and security, manifested through participation in NATO and the EU, as soon as possible after the overthrow of Russian domination in 1989. Currently, Ukraine is declaring such accession, making a pro-Western civilizational and political choice. Despite problems and omissions, Ukraine aspires to "belong to democratic, free states that recognize the rule of law." It is argued that Poland's enduring alliance with Ukraine and Lithuania within the Lublin Triangle and with other NATO eastern flank countries within the Bucharest Nine (and with Sweden and Finland following their expected accession to NATO), along with their economic cooperation within the Three Seas Initiative, will constitute an additional pillar of Poland's security and will also strengthen these countries' position within both NATO and the European Union. However, the security strategies adopted by Western countries focused on new security threats and often failed to consider the different security context of Central and Eastern European countries, particularly countries such as Poland, Romania, and the Baltic states. Due to their proximity to Russia, which has not abandoned its imperialist policies, these countries continued to highlight the potential for

intensification of military and related threats to security, as Russia exploits these factors to "soften" its potential adversaries.

In implementing its national security strategy, the Polish government intends to purchase modern weapons over the next few years, including Abrams M1A1 and Abrams M1A2 SER v3 tanks, as well as Korean K2 tanks. Military experts estimate that rebuilding the armored forces' capabilities after the transfer of several hundred tanks to Ukraine will take several years. Poland's military security will largely depend on the capabilities of Poland's three-tiered "Polish Shield" air defense system. The first, lowest-tier system, the Pilica, will consist of very short-range (up to 5 kilometers) missile and artillery systems. Within this tier, the next generation of missiles, following the "Piorun" missiles tested during the war in Ukraine, will be a new missile called "Grzmot" with a reinforced warhead, with a range exceeding 10 kilometers. It will also operate according to the "fire and forget" principle. This new type of weapon has been available since 2024, thanks to a collaboration between leading companies representing the Polish defense industry – Warsaw-based PIT-Radwar (radars, air control, reconnaissance and command systems, and anti-aircraft artillery) and the Skarżysko-Kamienna-based Zakłady Metalowe Mesko, a weapons and ammunition manufacturer within the Polish Armaments Group. The second tier comprises the Narew short-range missile systems (up to 25 kilometers, with newer versions reaching 45–60 kilometers). The system is expected to comprise 23 systems and cost approximately PLN 60 billion. The system will be capable of utilizing surface-to-air, sea-to-air, and air-to-air missiles. The core element of the Narew system will be British CAMM missiles, which will be used to counter air and missile attacks (fighters, drones, and cruise missiles). The Narew program envisions equipping the Polish military with an air defense system that represents a middle ground between the medium-range Wisła (Patriot) and very short-range systems such as Poprad and Pilica (Grom/Piorun). The Narew system will shoulder the burden of defending Polish skies. The system is not yet operational, which may be due to the need to choose between British company MBDA, which offers CAMM-ER missiles, and American company Raytheon Technologies, which supplies NASAMS missiles. The "Little Narew" system offers a remedy for this lack of protection for Polish skies. These are the first operational missile systems in the Polish military, capable of destroying enemy cruise missiles in flight. Since October 2022, launchers for the new weapon have been in position near Zamość. This pioneering system, in addition to CAMM missiles manufactured by MBDA UK, includes three British launchers and a Launcher on Jelcz chassis, a SOŁA mobile artillery radar station from PIT-Radwar,

a domestically developed Zenit fire control system, and two eight-wheeled Jelcz transport and loading trucks adapted for difficult terrain to transport missile ammunition. The third level of protection for Polish skies will be provided by the Wisła system, medium-range missile systems capable of striking targets approximately 100 kilometers away. This system will be operated by American Patriot batteries. The second phase of the project will include the purchase of six more batteries.

However, Poland cannot begin negotiations on their purchase until the U.S. completes work on the introduction of the new LTAMDS 360-degree radars into service. Omnidirectional radars are one of the operational requirements of the Wisła system, as they are currently in production. Once these deliveries are complete, Poland will have sixteen fire units integrated with the Pilica and Pilica+ systems, as well as the Narew system, integrated directly with the Wisła system. Together, these units will create a robust, multi-layered air defense system. The next segment of the Polish military's armament modernization is the Homar program. Under this program, Lockheed Martin will supply the Polish Army with 20 HIMARS long-range artillery rocket systems under a contract signed in 2019. Ultimately, plans call for the acquisition of HIMARS missile systems, equipped with long-range precision missiles for engaging land targets, to establish 27 artillery battalions equipped with approximately 500 M142 HIMARS launchers. Lockheed Martin is ready to collaborate with Polish industry and establish a regional technical support center for HIMARS systems on the Vistula River. Lockheed Martin is also ready to participate in the delivery of the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter (96 units) and PAC-3 MSE missiles, selected in the first phase of the Wisła program to arm Patriot systems. Additionally, approximately 300 K239 Chunmoo missiles from South Korea are to be purchased as an alternative under the Homar program. The launchers are to be integrated with Jelcz vehicles and the national TOPAZ command system.

These systems will also include missiles with ranges of 70 and 290 km. The armored forces are to be significantly strengthened. This is based on a contract for a more advanced version of 250 Abrams tanks, worth PLN 23 billion. This is intended to modernize the Polish armored forces, which rely largely on German Leopard 2 tanks. The Polish armored forces will also be reinforced with modern Korean K2 Black Panther tanks (ultimately 1,000 tanks) and 600 self-propelled howitzers. Between 2022 and 2026, Poland received 212 howitzers of this type and tanks. The Polish Air Force is also undergoing modernization, acquiring so-called fifth-generation aircraft for its arsenal. This will be achieved primarily through the purchase of state-of-the-art American F-35 Lightning II fighters. Poland has signed a contract for the

delivery of 32 aircraft. However, current plans assume that the first aircraft of this type will not appear in Polish skies until 2029. A remedy intended to replenish the declining number of "Polish wings" (due to the transfer of worn-out or partially transferred Soviet-made aircraft to Ukraine) will be 48 FA-50 aircraft from South Korea. Another reinforcement will be AW149 multi-role helicopters, which have been manufactured since 2009 by the Italian company Leonardo (formerly AgustaWestland).

The ailing Polish Navy also requires reinforcement. In March 2022, the Ministry of National Defense announced a major investment in the construction of the 59th Lockheed. A consortium led by Polska Grupa Zbrojeniowa (Polish Armaments Group), with the strategic participation of the British company Babcock, is responsible for implementing the project. The armed forces' potential will also be improved in cooperation with the Polish defense industry. Other planned purchases include the Baobab-K scattered mine-laying vehicle, which allows for the deployment of anti-tank mines over a large area without the need for an entire sapper unit, and a truck-mounted launcher capable of carrying a maximum of 600 mines. The Borsuk Amphibious Infantry Fighting Vehicle (AFV) will be produced in cooperation with the Stalowa Wola Steelworks (1,000 units have been ordered), which will replace the former Soviet IFVs. Meanwhile, in cooperation with the Polish company WB Electronics, HSW will produce Gladius unmanned search and strike systems. A key element in supplementing the armed forces' capabilities will be the WIZJER system drones, developed by the Air Force Institute of Technology and produced in cooperation with a consortium consisting of the Polish Armaments Group and the Military Aviation Works in Łódź and Bydgoszcz, which are scheduled to enter service with the Polish Army between 2024 and 2027. In June 2022, the Polish Armaments Group announced the signing of a contract with the Ministry of National Defence for 3,500 missiles and 600 launch mechanisms for the Piorun anti-tank missile system, which will be delivered in the coming years.

The war in Ukraine demonstrates the importance of good battlefield reconnaissance. Satellite coordinates from space-based satellites ("space eyes") are particularly crucial, enabling precise military planning and even enabling artillery fire control and target tracking for long-range missiles (including HIMARS launchers with missiles with a range of over 300 km). Satellite reconnaissance can also be utilized by the next-generation air forces that the Polish Army will have at its disposal (including F-35 fighter jets). A contract for the delivery of an Earth observation satellite system from Airbus will provide the Polish Army with such capabilities. Under the contract, Airbus will build and launch two S950 VHR satellites capable

of reconnaissance on the ground with an accuracy of 30 cm. The contract, signed by the Polish and French defense ministers, includes, in addition to the satellites, a package of logistical support, specialist training, and servicing of space and ground components. The agreement will largely make the Polish army independent from information from satellite sources available only from the United States and other NATO partners. In the last century, Poland regained its independence, fighting with almost every neighbor over the shape of its borders, only to lose it again after a relatively short period of independence. It emerged from the subsequent war as a formally independent state, yet not sovereign and dependent on the will of the Soviet hegemon and the state of relations between the global superpowers. It regained freedom of action in the international environment only after almost another half-century, once again facing the challenges of ensuring its continued survival and development. In these circumstances, the issue of state security, strengthening its independence and territorial integrity, naturally became a central concern of foreign policy, and the search for all available tools to achieve these goals was a simple necessity. In all three phases of Polish independence after 1918, state policy sought to utilize the possibilities inherent in the mechanisms of both collective defense and collective security. However, the balance between the practice of security policy, the roles assigned to them, and their actual significance remains crucial. During the interwar period, Poland, apart from intensive attempts to develop its own capabilities and potential, primarily relied on traditional security policy instruments, especially bilateral alliances. It drew on the then-current collective security system to a lesser extent, and often only out of necessity. This was the result of the major powers' decision to transfer to the League of Nations certain issues vital to the state's security and sovereignty (minority rights, border plebiscites, the status of the Free City of Danzig). This attitude toward the collective security mechanism likely stemmed in part from the novelty and obvious weaknesses of its contemporary form, and in part from the realities of the time and the ambivalent attitudes of key international actors towards it. This meant that many processes and activities crucial to Polish security occurred, as it were, alongside the League and contrary to its logic. Ultimately, the security policy of the Second Polish Republic ended in disaster with the loss of the war and occupation by hostile powers, yet it is difficult to discern the reasons for this – even in light of the myth of the "Allied betrayal of 1939." – in the poor definition of the proportion between the degree of attachment to its main multilateral instruments.

During the communist era, Poland did not independently decide on the scale of its involvement in individual multilateral security mechanisms. The Warsaw Pact was at the center

of its policy in this regard. While it served to some extent as a stabilizing factor and a guarantee of border security and territorial integrity, it was even more instrumental in maintaining subordination to the USSR. Poland's activity in the global, and from the mid-1970s also in the regional collective security system—though controlled and somewhat regulated by the bloc's hegemon—more often served to build and demonstrate limited autonomy in international relations than to create solid foundations for Polish security (though this, too, was important, at least in some respects—e.g., disarmament and arms control, and the norms regulating international relations globally and in Europe). In this context, and given the rather negative past experiences of participation in multilateral security cooperation mechanisms, it is somewhat surprising that after regaining sovereignty in 1989, the conviction that state security should be based on precisely such instruments relatively quickly prevailed in Polish politics. They were treated—rightly enough—as complementary, though with a clear priority given to NATO membership. This demonstrates a cautious assessment of the country's own capabilities and the opportunities offered by international cooperation, both based on collective defense mechanisms and forms of collective security (global and regional, of a general nature—the UN and OSCE—and sectoral—arms control and disarmament regimes). The focus on multilateral mechanisms was undoubtedly fostered by the post-Cold War international realities, in which the risk of armed conflict in Poland has been lowest since 1918 throughout this period, while the opportunities for multidimensional international cooperation are greatest. Nevertheless, for perhaps the first time in Poland's post-1918 history, it has been possible to relatively effectively utilize the potential of multilateral security policy instruments, despite their undoubtedly existing minor (NATO) and major (UN and OSCE) imperfections and the challenges they face. And importantly, now, to a much greater extent than in previous periods, it is up to Poland itself, its authorities and society whether this effectiveness can be maintained and perhaps even increased in the coming decades of independence.

A thorough, reliable, and objective analysis and assessment of Poland's security environment is an extremely important element of both the Alliance concepts adopted within NATO and the national security strategy of the Republic of Poland. It allows for the outline of the security situation, taking into account internal and external factors, as well as local, regional, and global factors. Conducted methodically and professionally, it enables the proper definition of the means and methods for their implementation. It also provides a starting point for operationalizing the assumptions adopted in the strategy. Based on the conducted research on strategic documents, it is clear that the security environment assessments made in NATO

strategic concepts and Polish strategies are highly convergent. Careful analysis confirmed the assumption that there is a similarity in the perception of the fundamental risks, opportunities, challenges, and threats to the security environment. Differences can also be observed, stemming from the specific entities and conditions defining the security environment. The most significant discrepancy in the documents examined was the perception of the Russian Federation. In Polish strategic documents, the attitude towards the Russian Federation evolved more rapidly than in NATO documents. At the same time, the perception of Russia at the NATO level has become closer to the Polish perception, which was confirmed in the 2022 strategic concept. The analogy shown in the analyzed documents is a positive example not only of a common approach to the security environment among member states, but also of taking into account the Polish point of view in NATO documents.

Given current security crises, such as Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as well as China's assertive policy towards Taiwan, it is essential to strengthen allied solidarity and emphasize its importance for collective security, both at the NATO and national levels. It is important to emphasize that Poland is playing an increasingly important role in NATO structures, and this should be emphasized in future security strategies. Diagnosing the security environment must take greater account of supra-regional challenges and threats. This will strengthen Poland's position as a significant player in NATO.

It is also in the national interest to promote and enhance the regional and local dimensions of the security environment. In striving to strengthen the Alliance, it is worthwhile to present selected issues when assessing the security environment and present them through the prism of their importance to all NATO members and international security, not just European security. This applies, among other things, to: threats of Russian aggression, hybrid actions of the Russian Federation, including its disinformation policy, instability of energy systems in Central Europe, etc. This assumption remains crucial in the context of deterring Russia, because without NATO maintaining its strategic involvement in our region, it will be impossible to strengthen its potential enough to actually deter a potential aggressor and prevent an attack on any of the NATO member states.

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