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CYBERSECURITY – THE CHALLENGE OF INFORMATION SECURITY IN TOMORROW’S SOCIETY

BEZPIECZEŃSTWO CYBERPRZESTRZENI CYWILIZACYJNYM WYZWANIEM ZWIĄZANYM Z BEZPIECZEŃSTWEM INFORMACJI W SPOŁECZEŃSTWIE JUTRA

Abstract: Cybersecurity is one of the most important contemporary challenges and also one of the challenges of tomorrow’s society. It concerns both the protection of the digital sphere of information and the sustainable development of the anthroposphere of the modern information society. The challenges of information security in cyberspace focus primarily on various types of threats. In the society of tomorrow, modern information and communication technologies, artificial intelligence and digital information security will play an important role. Assistance in recognizing them and using them to solve problems is offered by national security and social communication and media sciences, among others. The purpose of this article is to show the potential and role of information trust in information security efforts in the cyberspace of tomorrow’s society. This potential is represented by the four pillars of information security based on public trust in information, highlighted in the text.

Zarys treści: Bezpieczeństwo cyberprzestrzeni jest jednym z najważniejszych współczesnych wyzwań, a także jednym z wyzwań społeczeństwa jutra. Ten rodzaj bezpieczeństwa dotyczy zarówno ochrony sfery cyfrowej informacji, jak i zrównoważonego

rozwoju antropoinfosfery współczesnego społeczeństwa informacyjnego. Wyzwania dotyczące bezpieczeństwa informacji w cyberprzestrzeni wiążą się przede wszystkim z różnego rodzaju zagrożeniami. W społeczeństwie jutra istotną rolę odgrywać będą nowoczesne technologie informacyjne i komunikacyjne, sztuczna inteligencja oraz cyfrowe bezpieczeństwo informacyjne. Pomoc w ich dostrzeżeniu i wykorzystywaniu do rozwiązywania problemów może być zapewniona m.in. przez nauki o bezpieczeństwie narodowym oraz o komunikacji społecznej i mediach. Celem artykułu jest pokazanie potencjału i roli zaufania do informacji w działaniach na rzecz bezpieczeństwa informacji w cyberprzestrzeni społeczeństwa jutra. Potencjał ten jest reprezentowany przez wyeksponowane w tekście cztery filary bezpieczeństwa informacji oparte na zaufaniu społecznym do informacji.

Keywords: information security, information management, information and knowledge society.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo informacji, ład informacyjny, zaufanie do informacji, wiarygodność informacji, klimat informacyjny, zarządzanie informacją, społeczeństwo informacji i wiedzy.

In the era of free flow of information, cybersecurity is one of the strategic objectives in the defence of security of any country.¹ Information security is a global challenge of the 21st century.² This security depends on the smooth operation of mechanisms to prevent and combat threats in various spheres, including cyberspace. Such a prevention “mechanism” is the formation of social trust based on the author’s concept of the four pillars constructed in the article, emphasizing the humanistic aspect of information security. Information security is particularly important in conditions of ignorance or uncertainty, related to unknown or unknowable actions of others. Information security of tomorrow’s society will be shaped, in my opinion, by the following four pillars: social

¹ Cf. J. Grubicka, E. Matuska, *Bezpieczeństwo cyfrowe. Perspektywa organizacyjna*, Difin, Warszawa 2023; J. Grubicka, R. Kompowska-Marek, *Przestrzeń cyfrowa ponowoczesności. Jednostka. Technologia. Profilaktyka*, Difin, Warszawa 2024.

² Cf. W. Babik, *Information security as a global challenge for the 21st century*, “Studia nad Bezpieczeństwem” 2022, no. 7, pp. 39–47.

information governance, information trustworthiness, trust in information and a positive information climate.

1. Social trust – a key social category

Social trust is the foundation of information security in cyberspace. Hence, we will first define the concept of trust and its types, dimensions, tasks and functions, since social trust is based on it, as are the pillars of information security in cyberspace.

1.1. The concept of trust

Trust is a concept closely related to ethics and morality.³ It belongs to human discourse, which in practice means that we do not direct it towards the natural world, but towards the social world. From this it follows that other people and their actions are the main addressees of our actions. When interacting with others, we often find ourselves in a situation of uncertainty, dismay or surprise.⁴ We experience “opacity of other people’s intentions.”⁵ Trust directed at objects is only appropriate when they are the products of human activity, because in this way we indirectly express trust in the people who created them. By using the term trust in relation to objects or natural events we metaphorically give them human

³ Trust in an object is the knowledge or belief that its actions, future state or properties will turn out to be in accordance with our wishes. If we do not have such certainty, trust is also accompanied by hope. The object of trust can be anything, e.g. a person, animal, object, substance, institution, society, God. In the case of interpersonal relationships, trust usually refers to the honesty of the other party towards us, which does not necessarily mean honesty towards others, e.g. in a criminal group. Trust may or may not be reciprocal; it is one of the basic human bonds, both in the family and in social groups, and is sometimes particularly valuable in crisis situations. Instilling trust is also a common modus operandi of criminals, especially fraudsters. The emotion of trust is also experienced by more intelligent animals (entry *zaufanie*, Wikipedia.pl, <https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zaufanie>, accessed 19.12.2024). Cf. M. Szymczak (ed.), *Słownik języka polskiego*, PWN, Warszawa 1983, p. 584.

⁴ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie. Fundament społeczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Znaki, Kraków 2007, pp. 63–64.

⁵ A.B. Seligman, *The Problem of Trust*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 1997, p. 43.

characteristics.⁶ To trust, however, means to have the conviction that one can rely on someone, to expect the fulfillment of something (truth). Thus, trust refers to someone or something and means to confidently trust someone or something.

According to Eric Uslaner, the elementary type of trust is normative trust, which is an ethical attitude acquired through the process of socialization; “it is a general view of human nature and mostly does not depend on personal experience or the assumption that others are trustworthy (...) normative trust is the command to treat people as if they are trustworthy. It is a paraphrase of the golden rule (or Kant’s categorical imperative) (...) normative trust is the belief that others share your basic moral values and therefore should be treated by you as you would like to be treated by them.”⁷

Normative trust is based on the assumption of the goodwill of others, which justifies the choice of cooperative strategies during joint actions. According to this, “to trust is to believe, to move to the side of faith that cannot be reduced to anything else. Trust is specifically related to (...) ignorance. We don’t need to trust someone we have a constant eye on and whose actions we can directly control.”⁸

Francis Fukuyama, whose concept of trust is on the borderline of the normative trend, considers trust in terms of social capital. According to him, trust is “a mechanism based on the assumption that other members of a community are characterized by honest and cooperative behaviour based on commonly held norms.”⁹ These norms can be both religious and secular in nature.

In interpersonal relationships, we do not have the ability to directly or fully control the actions of others.¹⁰ Therefore, trust can be understood as “a strategy for dealing with the freedom of other entities or agendas.”¹¹ A person is constantly in a situation of uncertainty in relation to the future actions of others, over which they do not have any control and also do not know how others will react to their

⁶ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., pp. 62, 63.

⁷ E. Uslaner, *Zaufanie strategiczne i zaufanie normatywne*, in: P. Sztompka, M. Bogunia-Borowska (eds.), *Socjologia codzienności*, Wydawnictwo Znak, Kraków 2008, p. 185.

⁸ A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność i tożsamość*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2006, p. 27.

⁹ F. Fukuyama, *Zaufanie. Kapitał społeczny a droga do dobrobytu*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa–Wrocław 1997, p. 38.

¹⁰ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, p. 66.

¹¹ J. Dunn, *Trust and Political Agency*, in: D. Gambetta (ed.), *Trust Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*, Basil Blackwell. Oxford 2008, p. 73.

actions and can not in any way prepare for it.¹² This means that “uncertainty and risk are inherent in the human condition”¹³, including trust.

When an individual takes action despite uncertainty, lack of control and risk, we are dealing with trust, which belongs to the discourse of subjectivity which means that trust is seen as a strategy for dealing with uncertainty and the inability to control the course of the future.¹⁴ According to this assumption, trust is “a bet made on the uncertain future actions of other people.”¹⁵ In practice, this means that trust is made up of two elements: belief and the way it is expressed in practice.

The literature distinguishes four basic ways of expressing trust, which can occur separately or simultaneously in a single act of trust:

1. anticipatory trust – an individual takes an action oriented towards others because they are convinced that their actions will be beneficial to their interests.¹⁶ In this case, “the trusted party does not commit to anything, they may not even be aware that someone is placing their trust in them.”¹⁷
2. fiduciary trust – this type of trust has a defined addressee, and its foundation is the expected reactions of others to the trust we place in them.¹⁸ In this sense, trust involves “allowing other people (understood either literally or figuratively, i.e. also institutions, companies, etc.) to take care of something that is important to the one who places trust in them, in a situation where such care involves the exercise of some form of authority.”¹⁹
3. obliging trust – involves demonstrating one’s trust in relation to the other person in order to oblige them to meet our expectations.²⁰
4. provoked trust – this type of trust involves the demonstration of one’s trust in order to provoke an analogous reaction in the interaction partner, that is, to bring about a situation of mutual trust.²¹

¹² P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., pp. 66–67.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 67.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 69.

¹⁵ Ibidem, pp. 69–70.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 75.

¹⁷ R. Hardin, *Trusting Persons, Trusting Institutions*, in: R. Zeckhauser (ed.), *Strategy and Choice*, The MIT Press, Cambridge 1991, p. 198.

¹⁸ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 75.

¹⁹ A. Baier, *Moral Prejudices: Essays on Ethics*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1995, p. 105.

²⁰ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 76.

²¹ Ibidem, p. 78.

The content of trust varies dramatically depending on the situation, which means that trust is determined by the situational context, in which the key is whether the situation is clearly and unambiguously defined. Trust is usually relative in nature. Absolute trust is very rare and is most often demonstrated in pathological situations.

More often than not, specific expectations are closely linked to specific social roles and institutions, as there are legal rules that define how people who occupy certain social positions or work for a certain institution should act. When expectations are normatively defined, individuals and institutions are obliged to take full responsibility for their actions. Failure to live up to social trust is a violation of norms and carries certain sanctions. A key role in increasing public trust in social institutions is played by the legal system, which should be the foundation of cohesion and stability of the entire social organization. In order to increase the sense of stability of the social order it is necessary to guarantee the consistency and unquestionability of the rules, which should be guarded by the constitution and normative acts. In all institutions, positions should be filled by people who will represent them with dignity and professionalism when dealing with clients or petitioners.²² These people should remember that they function as “access points”²³ to the system and are obliged to properly represent the institution in which they work and the system of which they are a part.

In carrying out their duties, they should bear in mind that “attitudes of trust or distrust toward a particular abstract system are strongly influenced by experiences gained at access points (...) Bad experiences at access points can lead either to resigned cynicism or, where possible, to complete withdrawal from the system.”²⁴

1.2. Types of trust

The literature distinguishes three basic types of trust: personalized; generalized, that is, social; and institutional, understood as trust in formal institutions. Between these varieties of trust there are no clearly defined relationships.²⁵

²² Ibidem, pp. 132, 295.

²³ A. Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity*, Polity Press, Cambridge 1990, p. 90.

²⁴ Ibidem, pp. 90, 91.

²⁵ K. Nowakowski, *Wymiary zaufania i problem zaufania negatywnego w Polsce*, “Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny” 2008, vol. 70, iss. 1, p. 215.

Personalized trust involves a state of emotional affection toward people we know: family, friends and acquaintances. It is an attitude or disposition towards relationships with other people, a certain degree of acceptance of risk or harm that may occur during interaction with another person.²⁶ It is located in the “stock of handy knowledge”, forming socially approved, that is, taken for granted and self-understood natural behaviour in typical situations.²⁷ It is rarely the subject of conscious reflection. People assume that others with whom the acting person establishes relationships are treated as if they have the same stock of cache knowledge (the presumption that the world is the same for everyone).²⁸

Generalized trust is trust in strangers based on direct experience of living in society, daily relationships with friends, family, neighbours, colleagues and others with whom an individual interacts “face to face.” Personalized trust often creates the rationale for generalized trust.²⁹

Institutional trust is based primarily on indirect experience, transmitted information about institutions or political leaders. Lack of institutional trust can result from reflections on the state of political life, from attitudes toward people who lead democratic institutions and other agencies that implement public programmes, from general trust in the democratic system and democratic procedures.³⁰ According to Bo Rothstein “special” type of public institution produces social capital in the form of trust, and where this social capital does not influence the work of said institutions. The basic institutions that create social trust are law and order bodies such as courts, the police and the military.³¹ A different view is held by Robert Putnam, who argues that people trust public institutions because they trust others.³²

The aforementioned Francis Fukuyama argues that, with regard to trust, we can speak of gradually expanding concentric circles of trust, or the so-called

²⁶ Ibidem, pp. 215, 216.

²⁷ A. Schütz, *The Stranger*, in: A. Brodersen (ed.), *Collected Papers. Studies in Social Theory*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, The Hague 1976, p. 95.

²⁸ J. Turner, *Struktura teorii socjologicznej*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2004, p. 414.

²⁹ K. Nowakowski, *Wymiary...*, op. cit., pp. 216–218.

³⁰ Ibidem, p. 218.

³¹ B. Rothstein, *Social Trust and Honesty in Government: A Causal Mechanism Approach*, in: J. Kornai, B. Rothstein, S. Rose-Ackerman (eds.), *Creating Social Trust in Post-Socialist Transitions*, Palgrave Macmillan, London 2004, p. 7.

³² R. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Simon and Schuster, New York 2000, p. 8.

“trust horizon”: from the most direct interpersonal relationships to a more abstract reference to public objects. The smallest horizon includes trust in family members, which is most characterized by intimacy and closeness. Then we talk about trust in people we know personally, whom we identify by name and with whom we interact directly, such as friends, neighbours, work acquaintances and business partners. This trust is also characterized by a high level of intimacy and closeness. The wider circle of trust includes members of society whom we know indirectly or personally only through individual representatives, e.g. residents of our locality or employees of our company. The most distant horizon and the widest circle of trust includes people with whom we think we have something in common, although they are mostly “absent others” because we do not enter into direct relations with them, and only our imagination links them into actual collectivities, e.g. compatriots or members of some groups. In this case, trust in specific people is transformed into trust in social objects.³³

The famous Polish sociologist Piotr Sztompka assumes that trust is always directed towards the unpredictable actions of others, and consequently also towards the effects of their activities. These “others” come in many forms, while their actions are characterized by varying degrees of complexity. Based on this assumption, he proposed the author’s very detailed typology of trust.³⁴

1.3. Dimensions of trust

Actions that are expressions of trust are found in three areas of reality that are considered complementary. They make up the complex three-dimensional status of trust. On this basis, we view trust as a relationship, a personality tendency and a cultural rule.

The relational dimension of trust is dealt with by the theory of rational choice. The basic premise of this concept is that both trusting and trusted individuals are rational individuals seeking to maximize their own gains. These individuals evaluate the trustworthiness of a partner on the basis of available information and rational calculations. The relationship between them is transformed into a kind of game in which each partner is guided by their own rational arguments and takes into account the calculation-based rationality of the

³³ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., pp. 104–105.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 103–111.

other in their actions.³⁵ In this view, “trust is presented as primarily a rational expectation of – most often – the calculating trust of the trusted person (...) Trust [is seen] as a manifestation of interest.”³⁶ The trust entity is guided by two principles. The first is to maximize profit with risk. The second principle is to minimize the loss in a risky situation. The main problem for an individual who places trust is the lack of sufficient information related to all relevant aspects of a situation. The most difficult and demanding task of all kinds of information is to assess the trustworthiness of the individual or social object we want to trust.³⁷ According to James Coleman, “when we consider whether or not to place trust in someone, often the greatest unknown is the likelihood that the person will fail the trust placed in him or her.”³⁸ In a situation of mutual trust between interaction partners, we have a situation in which the trusted person reciprocates the trust of the partner expecting trustworthy behaviour on their part.³⁹ In this case, it is the trusted person who is obliged to fulfill the trusted person’s expectations in the situation of continuing the relationship. In a situation of mutual distrust, on the other hand, interaction partners suspect each other of immoral behaviour. They take all sorts of measures to separate themselves from their partner, which prevents them from verifying their suspicions.⁴⁰

Considering trust as a personality disposition, that is, the characteristics of the trusting person, is characteristic of social psychology. This approach is related to the so-called “basic trust” or “trust impulse”, which is seen as the result of a successful socialization process. The presence or absence of basic trust is a factor that significantly modifies the calculation of risks and costs, since it affects the granting or withdrawal of trust in relation to others.⁴¹

Trust viewed as a cultural rule is the domain of the cultural approach. According to this assumption, it is the normative rules inherent in a given culture that significantly influence whether or not an individual places trust in an object. Trust is directed toward social groups rather than individual relationships or individuals. In a given culture, trust rules apply both to those who bestow trust and to those who are trusted. This means that at the same time there are norms

³⁵ Ibidem, pp. 134–136.

³⁶ R. Hardin, *Trusting...*, op. cit., p. 187.

³⁷ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 136.

³⁸ J. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1990, p. 102.

³⁹ A. Giddens, *Nowoczesność...*, op. cit., pp. 133–134.

⁴⁰ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 137.

⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 142–143.

that obligate trust and norms that obligate one to behave in a trustworthy manner.⁴² Modern societies can be divided into societies that operate according to a culture of trust characterized by situations in which people not only routinely act on the basis of trust, but are also culturally encouraged to do so, and those that operate according to a culture of distrust, the so-called “culture of cynicism.”⁴³

1.4. Functions of trust

Trust has many functions. They are diverse, since trust affects basically every human activity. In the era of changes concerning both the organization and functioning of the modern world, trust is closely related to new forms of organizing human activity and activity. According to this, it is increasingly difficult for people to function effectively in various areas of life without trust.⁴⁴ In the literature many functions can be found of trust considered from the perspective of various criteria. Most often, however, the functions of trust are analysed from two perspectives: the benefits for the interacting partners and the benefits for the broader society within which the relationship takes place, that is, the group or community.⁴⁵

The functions for the interacting partners are divided into benefits for the trust givers and benefits for the trusted. The bestowal of trust on others involves positive actions toward those people, i.e. the expression of trust in action. Trust releases human subjectivity and triggers creative unconstrained and energetic actions toward people. Interactions with people we trust are free from fears, suspicion and caution, which allows for greater spontaneity and openness.⁴⁶

Fulfilling someone's expectations fulfills many benefits for the individual who has been trusted. According to Diego Gambetta, “It is important to trust others, but it can be just as important to enjoy their trust.”⁴⁷ The main gratification of meeting someone's expectations is to increase one's credibility. To be credible “means to live up to the trust given, to maintain someone's trust, to continue a relationship

⁴² J. Palka, R. Winkler, *Bariery budowy kultury zaufania*, “Zeszyty Naukowe – Akademia Ekonomiczna w Krakowie” 2006, no. 715, pp. 31–33.

⁴³ M. Mularska-Kucharek, *Kultura zaufania czy nieufności? O społecznym zaufaniu mieszkańców lokalnych społeczności*, “Wieś i Rolnictwo” 2010, no. 2 (147), pp. 67–71.

⁴⁴ A. Sankowska, *Zaufanie w społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, “Roczniki Ekonomii i Zarządzania” 2013, vol. 5, p. 117.

⁴⁵ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 305.

⁴⁶ N. Luhmann, *Trust and Power*, Polity Press, New York 1979, p. 8.

⁴⁷ D. Gambetta, *Can We Trust Trust?*, in: idem (ed.), *Making and Breaking...*, op. cit., p. 221.

with someone who places trust in us.” An individual who enjoys someone’s trust derives many benefits from it. The first is autotelic satisfaction, which is related to the innate human desire to live in a community, which entails a sense of recognition, sympathy or acceptance and facilitates interaction.⁴⁸ The second benefit is instrumental gratification of various kinds, which is primarily associated with the suspension of certain social constraints, and therefore “the trusted person can afford to take actions that would not otherwise be possible.”⁴⁹

The benefit of trust for the larger community is primarily to increase its so-called social capital. Social capital stimulates and enhances sociability, encourages joint participation in various types of communities by which, consequently, it expands the network of interpersonal ties, enlarges the field of interaction and makes it possible to establish closer relations with other people.⁵⁰ Trust fosters tolerance and acceptance of what is not known, allows for the existence of cultural and political differences and ensures that they are not perceived as a threat. Besides, it strengthens the ties between the individual and the community, influences the sense of identity and produces strong group solidarity, thereby encouraging people to cooperate and help each other. The existence of trust significantly reduces the costs of various social transactions and increases the chances of mutually beneficial cooperation.⁵¹

2. Pillars of information security in cyberspace

2.1. Information governance

From the point of view of the purpose of the article, it is worth emphasizing that “every society and economy form a certain social information order understood as a complex of social norms, processes, systems and information resources on the basis of which societies, states and economies function.”⁵² This order is shaped by the established norms of processes, systems and information resources, which in total form the information infrastructure of the state. Social information

⁴⁸ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., p. 310.

⁴⁹ J. Coleman, *Foundations...*, op. cit., p. 97.

⁵⁰ M. Cladis, *A Communitarian Defense of Liberalism: Emile Durkheim and Contemporary Social Theory*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 1992, p. 196.

⁵¹ P. Sztompka, *Zaufanie...*, op. cit., pp. 307, 308.

⁵² J. Oleński, *Ekonomika informacji. Metody*, PWE, Warszawa 2003, p. 9.

governance is formed in a wave of social and economic development. It is a determinant of the quality of life in the modern world.⁵³

The term “information governance” emerged at the Fifth Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement in Colombo in 1976. This conference recognized that information governance was as important as economic governance because of the importance of the problems. The issue of information governance was further clarified by the UNESCO Declaration in 1978, postulating the free circulation of information and the wider and balanced dissemination of information, including freedom of information and diversity of information sources and means. Since then, the problem of information governance has become the subject of discussion primarily within the UN, UNESCO and the group of non-aligned countries. Some Western countries and the US opposed any regulation on the issue, believing that information circulation should be an independent sphere and part of private property. When new technologies emerged in the 1980s, information flow became more accessible.

The social order of information also immanently includes civil rights, including the right to information. This means that “every citizen has the right to reliable, verifiable and up-to-date information that they need to live and function in society and the state. Restricting, obstructing or providing information that is untrue, unreliable or misinformation is a violation and infringement of human and civil rights.”⁵⁴ Hence, every citizen should have access to the appropriate amount of information that is necessary for them to exercise their other human and civil rights. Evident here is a high correlation between the development of legislation, privileges and regulations and the necessary knowledge that everyone should possess in order to develop properly and be able to adapt to the given environment.⁵⁵ This applies in particular to information policy, information law, customs and good practices, and the situation that the law is not a sham, is observed and respected, and that there is an inevitability of punishment for non-compliance with the law and the law is fair.

⁵³ Cf. J. Miluska, *Ład społeczny jako determinanta jakości życia*, “Ruch Prawniczy, Ekonomiczny i Socjologiczny” 2003, vol. 65, iss. 1, pp. 173–185.

⁵⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 15.

⁵⁵ T. Galewski, *Psychologiczne bariery informacyjne w społeczeństwie informacyjnym*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego” 2012, no. 721 (“Studia Informatica”, no. 29), p. 188.

2.2. Reliability of information

Information credibility is a complex and multi-faceted problem. It is a specific property of information correlated with information security, identified with the veracity and quality of information. This property of information is that a given piece of information can be verified as true when it meets the required standards of accuracy, timeliness, completeness and security. Assessing the credibility of information helps in deciding whether the information is valuable. When there is an inconsistency in the message from the sender in our perception of the information, then we do not believe the information. If the content of the message aligns with our mental model, then we accept the information in question as credible. Thus, the credibility of information is relativized to both the sender and the receiver of information.⁵⁶ Assessment of the credibility of information also depends on the medium that conveys it. The recipient's opinion of the credibility of the information usually depends on their opinion of the source of the information. The degree of intensity of other characteristics of information helps in assessing the credibility of information. People trust complete information more than incomplete information, transparent information more than opaque information, and verifiable information more than unverifiable. Fragmentary information is not considered reliable.

Reliability of information is a derived attribute relative to its accuracy, timeliness and completeness. These attributes are relativized to the recipient of the information.⁵⁷ The credibility of information is also relativized to its source – the sender of the information and to a specific domain.⁵⁸ Thus, the assessment of information credibility is subjective in nature and the attribute of “being information credible” is gradable.

In the context of meeting the information needs of citizens, it is important that the information directed to them be of high quality. The quality of information in inherent terms, i.e. in the context of its suitability to the user's

⁵⁶ J. Boruszewski, *Jakość i wiarygodność informacji w infobrokerstwie*, “Lingua ac Communitas” 2012, vol. 22, pp. 241–250.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 245.

⁵⁸ Cf. W. Babik, K. Piaśnik, *O wiarygodności informacji*, in: J. Morbitzer, E. Musiał (eds.), *Człowiek – Media – Edukacja*, Katedra Technologii i Mediów Edukacyjnych. Instytut Bezpieczeństwa i Mediów Edukacyjnych Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego im. Komisji Edukacji Narodowej w Krakowie, Kraków 2014, pp. 12–18.

needs, results from the following attributes of information, formulated, among others, by Vytautas Abramovich.⁵⁹

These are:

1. Truthfulness of information, which consists in the fact that the state of reality has been described within the limits of error accepted as acceptable.
2. Timeliness of information, when the state of a certain reality refers to the time when the information is received by the recipient or when it was created.
3. Reliability of information is a measure of its truthfulness and timeliness. When we can not determine its credibility, the credibility of its source is assumed.
4. Assimilability of information is that the recipient can use it without having to perform additional operations to transform it. It depends not only on the skills and knowledge of the specific recipient, but also on the conditions in which they are located and their condition.
5. Relevance of information is the weight that the user ascribes to it. It is subjective in nature, as each user may assign a different weight/relevance to it.

2.3. Trust in information

The relationship between trust in information and communication is indisputable. The classic forms of trust support are seals, signatures and initials, i.e. communication phenomena. Other elements of trust are reputation, recommendation, reference, credibility and, above all, image. These elements function only through communication processes. The manifestations of trust in information can vary. Marian Golka lists “island” trust, “hierarchical” trust and “network” trust. Let us add authorized trust and discuss them in turn. “Island” trust is strongly associated with particular groups or institutions. It manifests a kind of asymmetry. It is directly proportional to the sense of familiarity and strangeness and related manifestations of communication or its absence or low intensity.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ W. Abramowicz, *Filtrowanie informacji*, Wydawnictwo Akademii Ekonomicznej w Poznaniu, Poznań 2008, p. 43.

⁶⁰ M. Golka, *Bariery w komunikowaniu i społeczeństwo (dez)informacyjne*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, Warszawa 2008, p. 237.

“Hierarchical” trust functions on the basis of coercion or persuasion or even manipulation. Hierarchical communication processes are inherently not symmetrical. Finally, “network” trust is generated on the basis of mutual commitments and relationships almost exclusively through communication processes. It is characterized by a kind of faith, since this trust is inherently manifested mostly in face-to-face relations and differently in indirect contacts (e.g. on the Internet). Authorized trust is the result of respect for authorities. How do they function in a global society? According to Piotr Sztompka, “the chances of trust in such conditions are significantly reduced (...). In a globalized world it is more difficult to have a sense of obviousness and stability, as well as other conditions of trust. (...) the chances of it increasing rationality in evaluating the rationale for trust or distrust are also decreasing.”⁶¹ Thus, restoring trust in information is becoming one of the important challenges of information security.

2.4. Information climate

The theme of information climate is one of the important pillars of information security in cyberspace. The information climate is related to freedom of information and freedom to express one’s views and opinions. It refers to communication phenomena in society. It is a kind of metaphor built on the basis of meteorological phenomena. It is one of the elements of the social climate, as it relates to the prevailing conditions that favour or hinder various ways of information circulation. Deficiencies in the Polish literature in this area mainly concern the conceptualization and systematization of this issue important for information science. Information climate is usually associated with organizational climate.⁶² It can be defined as a set of people’s interpretations and feelings about information emphasizing the role of its broadcasting and perception as the most significant factors determining the type and level of climate.

Information climate can also be interpreted very generally as the existing/preferred set of values regarding the circulation of various types of social information. It determines the collective awareness of the desirable handling of

⁶¹ Ibidem.

⁶² Cf. G. Wudarszewski, *Początki zainteresowań problematyką klimatu organizacyjnego w polskiej literaturze naukowej*, “Zeszyty Naukowe Wyższej Szkoły Bankowej we Wrocławiu” 2016, vol. 16, no. 1, p. 55–71.

information and the degree of trust in information, which consequently translates into information security. An inadequate information climate can result in, among other things, difficulties in free communication, marginalization of grassroots initiatives, hypocrisy and insincerity of speech, so-called “political correctness” and even social alienation. It is often determined by the social emotional climate, which in extreme cases manifests itself in the form of new-speak and/or hate speech⁶³ and strikes at information security, including in cyberspace.

Conclusion

Information security in cyberspace continues to be one of the most important challenges of modern times. Cyberspace has a huge impact on the future of information security of tomorrow’s society. Social information security is the foundation of a democratic state.⁶⁴ The pillars of information security discussed in the article condition information security in cyberspace and emphasize its humanistic aspect and nature. Social information governance is not only important for social and economic development, but it is also the foundation of information security and a determinant of the quality of life in the modern world. Evaluating the trustworthiness of information not only helps in deciding whether information is valuable, but is also an important element of information security. Restoring trust in information is becoming one of the important social challenges of information security.⁶⁵ The reference to the area of information climate being a metaphor for meteorological phenomena emphasizing the impact of its influence on information security clearly highlights its importance in the context of information security in cyberspace. A separate treatment would require artificial intelligence, the current development of

⁶³ Cf. W. Babik, *Logistyka informacji*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2024 [in print].

⁶⁴ J. Oleński, *Spoleczne bezpieczeństwo informacyjne podstawą demokratycznego państwa*, “Roczniki Kolegium Analiz Ekonomicznych” 2015, no. 36, pp. 13–49.

⁶⁵ Cf. W. Babik, *O zaufaniu do informacji*, in: B. Taraszkiewicz (ed.), *Ekologia informacji jako wyzwanie dla edukacji i bibliotekarstwa XXI wieku*, Biblioteka Uczelniana AP, Pedagogiczna Biblioteka Wojewódzka w Słupsku, SBP – Zarząd Oddziału, Słupsk 2015, pp. 6–20.

which is straining confidence in information and poses a threat to information security, including in cyberspace.⁶⁶

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⁶⁶ J. Grubicka, E. Matuska, *Bezpieczeństwo cyfrowe. Perspektywa organizacyjna*, Difin, Warszawa 2023.

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Summary

Cybersecurity is one of the most important contemporary challenges and also the challenges of tomorrow's society. It concerns both the protection of the digital sphere of information and the sustainable development of the anthroposphere of the modern information society. The challenges of information security in cyberspace focus primarily on various types of threats. In the society of tomorrow, modern information and communication technologies, artificial intelligence and digital information security will play an important role. Help in recognizing them and using them in solving problems is offered by, among others, national security and social communication and media sciences. The purpose of the article is to show the potential and role of information trust in information security efforts in the cyberspace of tomorrow's society. This potential is represented by the four pillars of information security based on public trust in information, highlighted in the text.

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**THE MAIN ASPECTS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN
THE CITIZENS' MILITIA AND THE SECURITY SERVICE
IN THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES OF THE TWENTIETH
CENTURY**

**GLÓWNE ASPEKTY WSPÓŁPRACY MILICJI
OBYWATELSKIEJ ZE SŁUŻBĄ BEZPIECZEŃSTWA W LATACH
SIEDZEMDZIESIĄTYCH I OSIEMDZIESIĄTYCH XX WIEKU**

Abstract: The article concerns the poorly described issue of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the 1970s and 1980s, especially the main aspects of this cooperation. Based on an analysis of archival materials, the author tries to answer the question of the extent to which the goals, methods and competences of the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service were similar and how they intertwined. Based on the sources, it is possible to trace the similarities and differences in the operation of both services. Using the example of departmental studies and operational matters, examples of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service are shown in terms of information exchange, protection of the economy and combating political opposition. Their areas of interest often overlapped, especially in matters of an economic nature, and the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service often dealt with the same issues. Despite the fact that the importance of cooperation was repeatedly emphasized in internal documents, the analysis determined that it did not have real priority significance.

Zarys treści: Artykuł dotyczy słabo opisanego zagadnienia współpracy pomiędzy Milicją Obywatelską a Służbą Bezpieczeństwa w latach siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych XX wieku, a zwłaszcza tego, jakie były główne aspekty tej współpracy. Autor na bazie analizy materiałów archiwalnych próbuje odpowiedzieć na pytania, jak dalece cele, metody i kompetencje MO i SB były podobne oraz jak się przenikały. Na podstawie źródeł można prześledzić podobieństwa i różnice w działaniu obu służb. Na przykładzie resortowych opracowań oraz spraw operacyjnych pokazana została współpraca między MO a SB w zakresie wymiany informacji, ochrony gospodarki i zwalczania opozycji politycznej. Obszary zainteresowań tych służb często się przenikały, zwłaszcza w sprawach o charakterze gospodarczym, a MO i SB nierzadko zajmowały się tymi samymi zagadnieniami. Pomimo tego, że w wewnętrznych dokumentach niejednokrotnie podkreślano wagę współpracy, to w wyniku przeprowadzonej analizy ustalono, że nie miała ona w rzeczywistości priorytetowego znaczenia.

Keywords: Citizens' Militia, Security Service, intelligence work, secret collaborator, co-operation of law enforcement and secret services.

Słowa kluczowe: Milicja Obywatelska, Służba Bezpieczeństwa, praca operacyjna, tajny współpracownik, współpraca organów ścigania i służb specjalnych.

The history of the Citizens' Militia is not as popular as the history of the Security Service, which is evident even from a cursory comparison of the number of publications on the subject. In popular understanding the Citizens' Militia was indeed a formation protecting the communist system in Poland, but – which is understandable for many reasons – the attention of both most researchers and public opinion is focused on the SB.¹ It is worth noting that due to their exceptional brutality, the Motorized Reserves of the Citizens' Militia, as well as the grim realities of martial law, are still vivid in the memory of Poles. At the same time, in a simple, collective perspective, the insidious “UB” and “SB” were always much more dangerous than the “stupid militiamen” who were the butt of widely spread jokes.

¹ Piotr Majer and Tomasz Pączek, among others, have written about the history of the Citizens' Militia. In 2018, a valuable publication was published entitled *Brudne wspólnoty. Przestępczość zorganizowana w PRL w latach siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych XX wieku*, edited by Karol Nawrocki and Daniel Wicenty.

When it comes to what exactly the MO and SB dealt with, it is natural to automatically distinguish between fighting common crime and fighting political opponents. It is clear that the "category" of many cases was obvious: criminal cases were the domain of the MO, whilst political matters were handled by the SB. However, this clear picture becomes more complicated if we take into account some areas of activity of both services, and especially their cooperation (often called collaboration) in the field of mutual exchange of information, fighting the Catholic Church or protecting the economy of the Polish People's Republic.

What were the main aspects of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the Polish People's Republic, taking into account their operational tasks, work methods, organizational structure and mutual relations, especially in the context of combating criminality and political opposition? Is it possible to precisely define the boundaries separating the interests of the Citizens' Militia from those of the Security Service?

The aim of this article is to analyse the cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service, with particular emphasis on the differences and similarities in their operational work, approach to secret collaborators and common tasks related to the protection of the security order. An important question in the context of preserved archival materials is to what extent the cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service was really a priority, and to what extent it was ignored by officers? This is an area where the ideological declarations of the "fraternal services" had to diverge to some extent from practice.

The following hypotheses are put forward in this article: the goals and methods of work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service were convergent, especially in the area of combating economic crime, and the cooperation between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service, despite declarations of its significant importance, was not treated as a priority by officers in practice.

The subject study was created based on archival materials collected in the archive resources of the Institute of National Remembrance. During the research, internal publications of the ministry, diploma theses of officers and selected operational cases conducted by officers of the Voivodship Office of Internal Affairs in Szczecin were used.

Under the Act on the IPN-KŚZpNP, the Citizens' Militia constituted a state security body until 14 December 1954 (liquidation of the Ministry of Public

Security and “separation” of the Citizens’ Militia from the security apparatus), and therefore, archival materials concerning the Citizens’ Militia created after that time should be kept in the Main Police Archive. At the same time, pursuant to Article 25 of the aforementioned act, all broadly understood documentation of the prison authorities belongs to the archival resources of the IPN.² This may be surprising because the Prison Service (apart from the repressive nature of both services) carried out different tasks than the Citizens’ Militia and also had an impact on the lives of a much smaller number of citizens.

The topic of cooperation between the MO and the SB is present in historiography mainly in the context of demonstrations, strikes or securing mass events. After 1989, however, former police officers wanted to distance themselves from their colleagues from the SB and start a new chapter under the banner of the Police, although just a moment earlier they had been part of the “MSW empire” or a joint “company.”³ The new political climate has completely erased the years of propaganda-proclaimed “brotherhood” of both formations.

Before this happened, however, there was no shortage of reflection on the differences and similarities, mutual relations and dependencies. Departmental publications are a rich source of information on the cooperation of the MO and SB. They can be divided into three groups: book studies (textbooks), scientific or professional articles and diploma theses of officers (written based on operational materials). Specialized books and articles (most often written by departmental scientists or more capable officers) are usually of a higher standard than the latter mentioned theses.

A distinctive work is the small-volume publication by Colonel Aleksander Rozwadowski, a veteran of the security apparatus (he served in the MO from 1945) and later an associate professor at the Academy of Internal Affairs⁴, which was published in 1982. The specificity of personal sources of information and methods and forms in the operational work of the Militia Service, the similarities and differences in the operational activities of the MO and SB and

² Act of 18 December 1998 on the Institute of National Remembrance – Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, Dz.U. (Journal of Laws) 2023, item 102.

³ See A. Nyzio, *Rakowiecka w remoncie. Transformacja polityki bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego Polski w latach 1989–1993*, Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2021.

⁴ Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Dane osoby z katalogu funkcjonariuszy aparatu bezpieczeństwa: Aleksander Rozwadowski, <https://katalog.bip.ipn.gov.pl/informacje/81804>, (accessed 24.07.2025).

the outline of the lecture, as the title suggests, focuses, among other things, on the similarities and differences in the work of both services.⁵ Rozwadowski emphasizes that both the MO and SB conducted operational work through specific forces, using specific means and methods and within specific forms. Within the Militia, operational activities are primarily handled by employees of the criminal division, the division for combating economic crime (d/w PG) and some prevention officers (district and constables). If necessary, the militia used the same operational and technical divisions as the SB: "B", "C", "T" and "W".

The issue of working with personal sources of information is similar, although the author draws attention to the fact that secret collaborators of the MO were recruited more often on the basis of incriminating materials. He also notes that when recruiting (according to the police instructions) it was best to use material interests, because candidates often came from a parasitic and criminal element, where the only value was money. This is in contrast to the fact that the SB very often recruited secret collaborators on the basis of "volunteering and joint civic responsibility" who, if we are to believe the questionnaires filled out by the officers, most often expressed a positive attitude towards the SB and did not ask for money at all. Rozwadowski also notes that many candidates for militia collaborators were recruited on the basis of incriminating materials (because they committed common crimes and misdemeanours), and the SB usually did not have such possibilities because it recruited people from a higher ethical and intellectual level. Just like the SB, the MO could not recruit members of the PZPR as liaison officers, but additionally the police were not allowed to recruit people holding managerial positions in state authorities and administration or in political organizations (which the SB often did because higher-ranking people usually knew and could do more). Apart from that, Rozwadowski sums up that there were no significant differences between the SB and the MO when it came to maintaining documentation, contacts and working with secret collaborators. Both services also used the specialist knowledge of their consultants in very similar ways.

There was a certain difference in the subject of interest: the militia dealt with criminal activity and social pathologies (drug addiction, alcoholism and

⁵ Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Warszawie (hereafter AIPN w Warszawie), Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 003263/172, A. Rozwadowski, Specyfika osobowych źródeł informacji oraz metod i form w pracy operacyjnej Służby Milicji (Podobieństwa i różnice w działalności operacyjnej MO i SB – zarys wykładu), Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych, Warszawa 1982.

parasitism⁶). The SB, on the other hand, dealt with political matters, opposition circles, espionage, diversion and sabotage. Rozwadowski writes, however, that both services jointly dealt with the protection of the national economy. In the initial phase of an operational case in this area, it was often difficult to find out the nature and extent of the crime. Hence the need for mutual information (...) transfer of operational materials and even secret collaborators (...).⁷ This was to be the norm among operational and investigative officers and officers of the PG and divisions IV, V and (from 1985) VI of the SB.

It is interesting to compare the looser forms of cooperation, i.e. operational contacts of the Security Service and persons trusted by the Citizens' Militia. Theoretically, all police officers could work with trusted persons and in practice they were most often district police officers and constables. Police officers were only supposed to have lists of trusted persons, while SB officers were required to keep files of operational contacts, similar to the case of secret collaborators.⁸ The level of control in the Security Service was much higher because superiors controlled files and costs incurred. Therefore, much less was required of the MO in terms of maintaining documentation. Both services used official contacts (KS) in virtually the same way.

Leaving aside certain differences discussed in detail in the conduct of operational work, Rozwadowski concludes that the operational investigations of the MO and SB differed from each other in principle only in the subject of their activities, although in combating economic crime there may be a "far-reaching convergence." By passing on information to each other: "(...) they serve the same purpose, which is to maintain law and order and security in our country."⁹

The socio-political situation in Poland in the first half of the 1970s was much more favourable for the communist authorities than it would be a decade later. However, cooperation between the services and unwavering defence of the threatened "law and order" were similarly assumed. After the tragic events of December 1970, it was decided to better prepare the security apparatus for the future, and especially for potential strikes, officially called "work stoppages." The MO and SB were to modernise and operate more

⁶ The most common form of parasitism was the avoidance of work.

⁷ AIPN w Warszawie, Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 003263/172, A. Rozwadowski, *Specyfika osobowych...*, op. cit., p. 12.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 19.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 41.

professionally, which was also expressed by the development of new binding operational work instructions for the SB from 1 February 1970 and for the MO from 5 July 1974.

On 6 May 1971, a conference of the senior management of the MO and SB was held under the chairmanship of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Franciszek Szlachcic, the summary of which was issued by the Department of Training and Professional Development of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.¹⁰ In his speech Szlachcic referred to the MO and SB, pointing out that the ministry must develop regulations and action plans in the event of “serious disturbances”, assuming that the SB will be responsible for the security of “closed rooms”, and on the streets and in “open spaces” the MO will play the leading role, with the provincial commander being responsible for the preparation and course of the activities. The MO and SB were to support each other in suppressing unrest. The minister sharply criticized in particular the “laziness and mess” in the SB, insufficient operational work, excessive concentration on writing reports and taking photographs (which were at a low level anyway), and, perhaps surprisingly, the desire to expand the agency. He said: “You have to recruit very carefully. Even if you had 10 secret collaborators, you still would not prevent potential conflicts.”¹¹ This is especially interesting if we take into account the completely different perspective on this issue in the 1980s, i.e. the massive expansion of the network of secret collaborators.¹² In his opinion, the compact units of the MO were insufficiently trained and equipped. However, Szlachcic had no objections to the attitude of the “rank and file” officers of the MO and SB, recalling, for example, a meeting with a policeman with a shattered skull who expressed his willingness to continue serving. However, he believed that the leadership of the services was insufficiently prepared, that it was necessary to maintain “close contact” with the army and under no circumstances to claim that it was the army that was shooting and the militia that “was not shooting.” He argued that if the

¹⁰ AIPN w Warszawie, Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych (hereafter MSW), ref. no. 01522/254, Organizacja działań sił SB i MO w sytuacjach szczególnych (materiały z kursokonferencji), Departament Szkolenia i Doskonalenia Zawodowego MSW, Warszawa 1971.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 12.

¹² In 1988, the number of secret collaborators reached a record 98,000, and many SB officers simultaneously ran several to a dozen or so collaborations. See e.g. T. Ruzikowski, *Wstęp*, in: idem (ed.), *Instrukcje pracy operacyjnej aparatu bezpieczeństwa (1945–1989)*, IPN, Warszawa 2004, p. 15.

situation required it, the MO should use weapons as often as required, without at the same time jeopardizing the image of the army, which was very important to the authorities.

An interesting perspective on the relations between the MO and the Security Service is provided by a probably never-published study written after 1981 by an officer from Kielce named Steć, who was assisted in editing and collecting materials by the deputy commander of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Kielce, Colonel Kazimierz Sawin.¹³ Apart from a number of regulations and directives concerning the cooperation of the services, which the author cites and points out, he talked to many employees and during the survey some of them were unable to provide any regulations concerning the cooperation of both services.¹⁴ Given such a low level of knowledge of the issue, the writer felt it was necessary to remind people of this obligation.

Of note is the order 011/74 of the Commander-in-Chief of the Citizens' Militia of 10 August 1974, which obliged the militiamen, among other things, to take greater interest in foreigners. As we read: "(...) Citizens' Militia officers were obliged, among other things – to take an interest in such issues that fall within the scope of competences and duties of the Security Service (...)." ¹⁵ Police officers were to keep the Security Service informed via their superiors about all events involving foreigners, especially if they were related to a threat to the country's defence and economy. Moreover, the order no. 072/76 of the Minister of Internal Affairs of 30 December 1976, which set out the activities for the years 1976-1980, obliged the Security Service to further tighten cooperation within the Security Service, and even to conduct offensive preventive actions in all sectors of the national economy.¹⁶ Great emphasis was placed on district police officers collecting as much information as possible and counteracting political crimes together with officers from the Security Service. This is understandable as district police officers should know their "district" and its inhabitants. Officers on duty at the MO were also to be an important link in communication with the Security Service. Surprisingly, similar obligations were imposed on the Road Traffic

¹³ AIPN w Warszawie, Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 657/1832, *Zasady i praktyczna realizacja współdziałania Służby Bezpieczeństwa i Milicji Obywatelskiej w jednostkach terenowych na przykładzie KW MO Kielce*, pp. 64–105.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 67.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 74.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 74.

Units of the MO, which were also supposed to combat hostile political, sabotage and economic activities, most often by immediately reporting. However, police officers were not very keen to provide information as they quite often passed on information with a delay or did not notify the SB at all.

In general, the Citizens' Militia, together with the Security Service, was to combat the dissemination of hostile materials such as leaflets, posters or inscriptions on walls, pursue distributors and authors of anonymous letters, secure traces and evidence of political crimes, and after detecting the perpetrator or the prohibited act, the criminal service of the militia was obliged to agree with the Security Service unit on a possible transfer of the case, although this could also take place at the request of the Security Service itself.¹⁷ Additional duties, a superior role and the "prominence" of the SB could of course interfere with many police officers, which does not change the fact that even constables were supposed to provide the SB with useful information. As the author noted, there were more police officers, and the scope of interests of foreign secret services was very wide. The MO units were too poorly used for counter-intelligence security and their involvement in cooperation with the SB was "small."¹⁸ The fact that the Kielce Road Traffic Department provided only 51 reports of diplomatic service cars passing by during a specific period is telling, when the Security Service recorded as many as 1,172.

In view of this situation, in 1979 the management of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Kielce developed extensive plans to improve cooperation. The Security Service was to include cooperation with the Police in its work plans, the Police Service was to receive new tasks in the field of detecting illegal religious buildings, and the Police and Security Service officers were to "comprehensively use personal sources of information for the benefit of both services."¹⁹ These plans were put into action in 1980, thanks to which the MO and SB began to inform each other about threats much more often, which the author describes in detail and with a division into specific departments. For example, in the context of the activities of Department IV of the SB, police officers "immediately passed on" information about the speeches of priests, visits of bishops, attitudes of priests or the purchase of land and buildings.²⁰ Thanks to the MO, harmful initiatives of the clergy were "silenced", operational matters were conducted more

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 82.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 89.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 92.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 98.

effectively and the construction of new chapels was thwarted. Although this is not the main topic of this article, the described examples show that the MO often helped the SB very much.²¹

The aforementioned diploma theses of officers also provide a more “local” perspective on the issue of cooperation between services. Works by Jan Murawski²² (1975) and Zbigniew Mróz²³ (1989) were written based on operational materials and end with similar conclusions. The police should have a better understanding of the issues related to the work and tasks of the Security Service, both services should coordinate their work with secret collaborators and sharing information should be a common practice. According to Murawski, the MO should not treat tasks performed for the SB as “additional activities”, but as “regular tasks performed in the course of everyday duties.” Mróz expressed a more conciliatory opinion, raising the need to maintain an “atmosphere of camaraderie, cordiality and mutual respect between officers of both services.” As can be seen from the example of many sources, the cooperation between the MO and the SB did not always proceed smoothly and we can assume that police officers in particular could have been dissatisfied with the fact that they often had to perform tasks assigned by the SB.

Jan Murawski, writing about the issue of protection of the economy, emphasized, among other things, that the MO “takes over operational protection of non-key objects of the national economy that remain outside the interest of the SB (...). The Militia provides information to Division III from objects of the national economy in the scope of conflict situations occurring among crews, established facts of hostile inscriptions, leaflets, theft of duplicators, typewriters and other equipment that could be used for hostile activities.”²⁴ Interestingly, the author noted in the final conclusions that the Security Service should inform

²¹ See AIPN w Warszawie, MSW, Departament IV, ref. no. 01522/450, Niektóre elementy organizacji współdziałania Służby Bezpieczeństwa i Milicji w zakresie zapobiegania zagrożeniom lub naruszeniom porządku i bezpieczeństwa publicznego, wywoływane-go działalnością hierarchii i kleru, 1970.

²² AIPN w Warszawie, Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych (hereafter ASW), ref. no. 1510/3485, Operacyjna ochrona obiektów przemysłowych w aspekcie współdziałania SB i MO na przykładzie woj. warszawskiego, ASW, Warszawa 1975.

²³ AIPN w Warszawie, MSW, ref. no. 03204/5, Potencjalne możliwości współdziałania i współpracy MO i SB w zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przestępczości pospolitej i politycznej na przykładzie RUSW w Gostyniu, Ośrodek Doskonalenia Kadr Kierowniczych MSW, Łódź 1989.

²⁴ AIPN w Warszawie, ASW, ref. no. 1510/3485, Operacyjna ochrona obiektów..., op. cit., p. 78.

the MO about whether the information provided was useful and how it was used. The supervisor of Murawski's work, who was considered to be of a high standard, was Eugeniusz Cilecki, a prominent theoretician of economic protection, who ten years later would write a manual sent to SB units throughout the country, "Operational Protection of the National Economy of the Polish People's Republic."²⁵ In the context of the scope of cooperation between Department V of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Militia, Cilecki wrote in the mid-1980s: "(...) with the MO service – revealing scandalous economic crime, economic damage, facts of violating secrets, criminal activities of foreigners and hostile opposition groups in the country."²⁶

According to the operational instructions, the Security Service had the right to involvement in the affairs of the Citizens' Militia, and the cooperation of both services was discussed in the fifth paragraph of this document. The primary role of the Security Service in practice could be reduced to mainly informing the Citizens' Militia (resulting in initiating cases), and less often to precisely enforcing specific actions of the militia or carrying out joint actions. This can be seen well in the example of some operational cases of an economic nature.

In 1986, Department VI of the Provincial Office of Internal Affairs in Szczecin initiated an operational verification case codenamed "Spadek."²⁷ As noted by the SB officer, in the course of operational activities it was established that in the District Horticultural and Beekeeping Cooperative in Szczecin in the first half of 1986 losses amounting to at least 7 million złoty were incurred. The socio-economic situation in the enterprise was difficult and was assumed to be systematically deteriorating. It turned out that the list of negligence and deliberate, harmful actions was long, among other things, the cooperative's board was supposed to have colluded with the producers-members of the same cooperative to push prices that were too high, and the staff did not enter evidence of income and expenses in the reports. It was considered that the blame for this state of affairs was mainly borne by the president and the previous board. Inspired by the SB, the Supervisory Board dismissed the president and a new board adopted a programme to improve the cooperative's finances,

²⁵ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 652/22, Operacyjna ochrona gospodarki narodowej PRL, Warszawa 1985.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 41.

²⁷ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0011/1872, Sprawa operacyjnego sprawdzenia o kryptonomimie „Spadek”, 1986–1988.

which was implemented in cooperation with the Bank Gospodarki Żywnościowej, which conducted the inspection. A number of further inspections were also carried out, which in turn revealed further irregularities. The SB inspector who concluded the “Spadek” case passed the information to the police’s Department for Combating Economic Crimes. In response, the police initiated its own operational investigation case codenamed “Octownia”, which it conducted until 1988.²⁸

It is difficult to estimate how many operational cases the MO and SB initiated thanks to the mutual exchange of information without conducting extensive archival research. It could have been a noticeable percentage, as could be the cases that were “duplicated”, i.e. initiated almost simultaneously by both services, especially since their areas of interest often overlapped.

For example, from the operational case codenamed “Płonia”²⁹, concerning the poisoning of water in Kołbacz near Szczecin, we learn that first, on 3 January 1986, the militia initiated preparatory proceedings, after which they notified the Security Service, which opened its own case only on 22 January 1986.

Regardless of individual cases, various details or local “specificity”, it should be recognized that there were areas where cooperation between the MO and SB was natural and had a continuous character. It was also quite paradoxical: at the same time “necessary” and neglected. Its course was influenced by the regulations that were issued, the orders issued and, above all, the changing realities of the Polish People’s Republic, and consequently, the needs of the security apparatus.

However, in relation to the research problem – and bearing in mind the paramount role of the Security Service³⁰ – it can be stated that the key aspects were the exchange of information, control of foreigners and joint protection of facilities. Operational activities were conducted similarly by both services, and especially in relation to issues of an economic nature, the methods of operation and goals were often almost identical. At the same time, the sources

²⁸ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0012/391, vol. 10, Sprawa rozpracowania operacyjnego o kryptonimie „Octownia”, 1987–1988.

²⁹ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0011/1658, Sprawa operacyjnego rozpracowania o kryptonimie „Płonia”, 1986.

³⁰ Resulting from, among others, order no. 006/70 (operational instruction) and the aforementioned order no. 011/74 of the Commander-in-Chief of the Citizens’ Militia of 10 August 1974.

clearly show that this fundamental (at least declarative) cooperation in practice left much to be desired and it is difficult to consider it a priority for either side.

It would be a far-reaching simplification to say that it is easy to distinguish between what interested the MO and the SB. Too often, competences overlapped, especially when it came to the broadly understood "protection of the economy." It can be argued, however, that since the SB played a formally confirmed superior role towards the "auxiliary" MO, "SB" matters were generally more important than "militia" matters. However, the examples from operational matters show that both services could also "share" interesting issues or objects, especially since there were many more militia members.

Based on the analysis of archival materials, the research hypotheses were verified to a large extent. The goals and methods of work of the MO and SB, especially in the economic area, were generally similar, which is confirmed by, among other things, the fact that cases were opened on the same issues and the previously cited publication by Aleksander Rozwadowski, who writes in this context about "joint protection" and "far-reaching convergence." The hypothesis that despite declarations, cooperation between the two services was not (with possible exceptions) treated as a priority was also confirmed by the sources.

Unsurprisingly, officers focused more on carrying out their own, basic tasks and cooperation between the services was usually irregular and ad hoc in nature (as shown by the examples concerning the exchange of information).

To sum up, the goals and operational methods of the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service were similar, although these services differed in their approach to secret collaborators (differences in documentation management, differences in motivations and the ethical and intellectual level of the secret police), they operated in a similar way in combating economic crime, while "serious" cases with an undoubted political or counter-intelligence dimension were definitely the domain of the Security Service, such as the dismantling of the Catholic Church.

The question of the scale of deeper cooperation and mutual trust or even intimacy of relations between the services remains open. The preserved ideological and propaganda materials created an almost ideal image of harmonious cooperation in the face of enemy actions³¹, while departmental administrative, operational or scientific documents often contradict this image. Issues such as mutual

³¹ See AIPN w Warszawie, ASW, ref. no. 2499/310, Funkcjonariusze SB i MO w propagandzie ośrodków dywersji i grup opozycji w Polsce, ASW, Warszawa 1988.

exchange of information and training of both services, counter-intelligence security, surveillance of the Catholic Church or joint “protection of the national economy” deserve extended, in-depth research.

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Summary

The article concerns the rarely described cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century. Both MO and SB were tasked with protecting the Polish communist state. Based on archival sources, one can look into the similarities and differences in how both services operated, as well as show the areas where their interests often overlapped. By the example of internal studies and cases, the cooperation between MO and SB is shown, regarding the exchange of information, protection of economy and fighting the opposition.

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**PERSPECTIVES ON NEARSHORING INDUSTRIAL
PRODUCTION FROM CHINA. DIRECTION AND
CHALLENGES IN THE CONTEXT OF LOCAL BUSINESS
NEEDS**

**PERSPEKTYWY NEARSHORINGU PRODUKCJI
PRZEMYSŁOWEJ Z CHIN. KIERUNEK I WYZWANIA
W KONTEKŚCIE POTRZEB LOKALNYCH
PRZEDSIĘBIORCÓW**

Abstract: In recent decades, the global economy has witnessed significant transformation, primarily due to globalization and technological development. One of the key elements of this change has been the role of China as the “world’s factory,” which has contributed to the intensification of industrial production offshoring. However, in the face of rising labour costs in China, changing geopolitical conditions and the push for sustainable development, we are observing a gradual increase in interest in nearshoring. This article aims to explore the prospects of nearshoring industrial production from China, focusing on the directions of this shift and the challenges it faces.

Zarys treści: W ostatnich dekadach globalna gospodarka przeszła znaczącą transformację, głównie ze względu na globalizację i rozwój technologiczny. Jednym z kluczowych elementów tej zmiany była rola Chin jako „światowej fabryki”, co przyczyniło się do intensyfikacji offshoringu produkcji przemysłowej. Jednakże, w obliczu rosnących kosztów pracy w Chinach, zmieniających się warunków geopolitycznych oraz nacisku na zrównoważony rozwój, obserwujemy stopniowy wzrost zainteresowania nearshoringiem. Niniejszy artykuł ma na celu zbadanie perspektyw nearshoringu produkcji przemysłowej z Chin i skupia się na kierunkach tej zmiany oraz wyzwaniach, jakie ona stwarza.

Keywords: nearshoring, industrial production, labour costs, environmental regulations, supply chain, investment risk.

Słowa kluczowe: nearshoring, produkcja przemysłowa, koszty pracy, regulacje środowiskowe, łańcuch dostaw, ryzyko inwestycji.

Introduction

Traditionally, offshoring production to countries like China has offered companies significant cost advantages, primarily due to lower labour costs and supply chain flexibility. However, in recent years, this trend has evolved towards nearshoring, meaning relocating production closer to target markets. Several factors contribute to this shift, including rising production costs in China, the need to increase supply chain flexibility and efforts to minimize the carbon footprint.

1. Directions of change

1.1. Increasing production costs in China

The significant economic growth in China over the past decades has led to a considerable rise in labour costs, narrowing the production cost gap between China and developed countries. This phenomenon, combined with stricter environmental regulations and rising raw material costs, has resulted in higher

operational costs for companies operating in China. Additionally, growing environmental awareness and pressure to reduce CO₂ emissions are prompting businesses to reorganise their supply chains to minimise their carbon footprint, including relocating production closer to consumer markets, which can also reduce emissions related to transportation. The rise in labour costs in China is driven by several factors, including urbanization, an increase in worker qualifications and growing competition for skilled labour. This phenomenon has been widely discussed in economic literature, which points out that China is losing its position as a “global factory” with low production costs.

1.2. Tightening environmental regulations

The tightening of environmental regulations in China is a key factor affecting production activities in the country. In response to growing concerns about climate change and environmental pollution, the Chinese government has introduced a series of measures aimed at reducing the industrial sector’s environmental impact. These include restrictions on emissions, as well as requirements related to recycling and energy efficiency. While beneficial for the environment, such measures can lead to higher production costs for businesses.

Recycling requirements compel companies to invest in appropriate technologies and processing systems, which can be costly but may also contribute to improving the company’s image as an environmentally responsible producer. On the other hand, energy consumption restrictions drive businesses to invest in more modern and energy-efficient machinery and technologies, which, despite initial expenditures, can lead to savings in the long term. The introduction of these regulations aligns with the global trend towards increasing environmental responsibility in production. Companies that adapt to these new requirements can not only reduce their negative environmental impact but also improve their competitiveness in international markets, which increasingly prioritise sustainable development.

1.3. Rising raw material costs

The global increase in demand for raw materials, rising energy prices and restricted access to certain key materials have also contributed to the rising

production costs in China. Fluctuations in raw material prices directly affect the profit margins of manufacturing firms and may force businesses to seek more cost-effective logistical and production solutions.

1.4. The need for greater supply chain flexibility

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on global supply chains, highlighting the need for greater flexibility. Major disruptions in supply chains resulting from the pandemic forced companies to rethink their strategies and often focus production closer to target markets through nearshoring. These decisions were motivated by the need for quicker responses to changing market conditions and the desire to reduce the risk of future disruptions. As part of their adaptation, companies are investing in new technologies and automation to manage higher labour costs in regions closer to their final markets. Digitalisation and advanced analytics have become crucial for improving supply chain visibility and efficiency, as confirmed by data from a McKinsey study, where most companies have invested in new digital technologies to better manage their supply chains.¹

Supply chain disruptions have also contributed to producer price inflation (PPI), particularly in sectors highly dependent on foreign suppliers. Research conducted by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis found that sectors such as automotive, coke and petroleum, and basic metals were particularly vulnerable to rising PPI inflation due to international supply chain disruptions.²

In summary, the pandemic exposed the vulnerabilities of complex global supply chains and demonstrated the importance of increasing their resilience through supplier diversification, investments in automation and digital technologies. Companies that adapt to these changes will be better prepared for future challenges and potential disruptions.

¹ K. Aliche, T. Morley-Fletcher, R. Gupta, S. Lund, *How COVID-19 is reshaping supply chains*, McKinsey & Company, <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/operations/our-insights/how-covid-19-is-reshaping-supply-chains>, (accessed 05.06.2025).

² A.M. Santacreu, J. LaBelle, *Supply Chain Disruptions and Inflation During COVID-19*, “Economic Synopses” 2022, no. 14, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, <https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/economic-synopses/2022/05/12/supply-chain-disruptions-and-inflation-during-covid-19>, (accessed 7.06.2025).

1.5. Changes in trade regulations

Changes in trade regulations have a significant impact on the nearshoring process, which is gaining popularity as a strategy allowing companies to relocate part of their production or services to neighbouring countries. However, nearshoring may encounter various obstacles arising from the introduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers. These barriers are established by countries to protect local markets and businesses from foreign competition, which may include tariffs, quotas, import restrictions, as well as more subtle forms of barriers, such as stringent quality standards and sanitary regulations.

Tariff barriers are relatively straightforward to identify, as they involve direct fees imposed on imported goods. Examples of such barriers include import tariffs, which aim to increase the costs of foreign products, making them less competitive in the local market. On the other hand, non-tariff barriers, though often more complex and subtle, may include various regulations and standards that are not necessarily formulated with protectionism in mind but can impede international trade through technical, sanitary, or phytosanitary requirements.

Companies planning nearshoring strategies must therefore continuously monitor changes in trade regulations, which requires not only ongoing legal analysis but also strategic planning and potential operational adaptation. In this context, it is crucial to both understand the current regulations and anticipate potential changes in the trade policies of the countries with which the company collaborates or plans to collaborate. This approach allows businesses not only to minimize the risks associated with trade barriers but also to better leverage the benefits of nearshoring, such as lower production costs, shorter delivery times and greater operational flexibility.

2. Human resource management

Relocating production or service activities to countries geographically closer to key markets, known as nearshoring, is gaining popularity as a strategy that enables companies to enhance flexibility and operational efficiency. This process brings with it challenges related to human resource management (HRM), which are crucial for the success of such relocations.

Effective human resource management in the context of nearshoring involves retraining existing employees and attracting new talent in the new locations. It is essential that HR strategies are integrated with the overall corporate strategy and

adapted to the specific characteristics of the local labour market. As highlighted by Lengnick-Hall et al. achieving both vertical and horizontal alignment between HR policies and the strategic goals of the organization is key.³

Research shows that the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated changes in human resource management, forcing companies to adapt to remote management and the digitization of HR processes. Hamouche points out that the crisis also created new opportunities for organisations to rethink and adjust their HR practices in response to changing conditions.⁴

Moreover, strategic human resource management (SHRM) plays a vital role in building a sustainable competitive advantage by developing human capital and engaging employees. Research conducted by Hamadamin and Atan in 2019 confirms that SHRM practices can positively influence human capital development and employee engagement, which are essential for the success of nearshoring strategies.⁵

As Brewster notes, international human resource management requires an understanding of local practices and legal frameworks, which is critical when relocating operations to new regions. The effectiveness of this process can be supported by strategies such as creating international teams, which can better adapt HR practices to local conditions while maintaining consistency with the company's global standards.

According to Farndale, talent management in new locations often requires hiring local specialists, which can bring additional benefits, such as a deeper understanding of the local market and culture. Hiring local employees can also contribute to better integration of the company into the local business environment, which is crucial for the long-term success of nearshoring operations.⁶

³ P.H.N. Bispo, *Implementation of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices: A Review of the National Scientific Production and New Research Directions*, "Revista de Gestão" 2019, vol. 26, iss. 3, , pp. 228–248, <https://doi.org/10.1108/REG-10-2018-0102>, (accessed 5.06.2025).

⁴ S. Hamouche, *Human Resource Management and the COVID-19 Crisis: Implications, Challenges, Opportunities, and Future Organizational Directions*, "Journal of Management & Organization" 2021, pp. 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2021.15>, (accessed 12.06 2025).

⁵ H.H. Hamadamin, T. Atan, *The Impact of Strategic Human Resource Management Practices on Competitive Advantage Sustainability: The Mediation of Human Capital Development and Employee Commitment*, "Sustainability" 2019, no. 20, art. 5782, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11205782>, (accessed 5.06.2025).

⁶ E. Farndale, C. Brewster, P. Ligthart and E. Poutsma, *The Effects of Market Economy and Foreign MNE Subsidiaries on the Convergence and Divergence of HRM*, "Journal of International Business Studies" 2017, vol. 48, p. 48.

In summary, human resource management in the context of nearshoring requires not only adapting HR strategies to new conditions but also investing in human capital development and building employee engagement. It is essential that this approach be holistic, taking into account both local specificities and the global objectives of the organization.

3. Changes in consumer expectations

Shifting production closer to consumers not only shortens supply chains but also helps reduce carbon emissions associated with long-distance transportation. For example, reducing transportation distances can lower a company's carbon footprint, which is increasingly valued by environmentally conscious consumers.

At the same time, nearshoring allows companies to better tailor their products to the specific requirements and preferences of local markets, potentially increasing product appeal and customer satisfaction. In the context of global climate change and the pressure for sustainable development, companies can gain a strategic advantage by implementing sustainable practices in both the production and distribution of their products.

Market and technological analyses play a key role in adapting supply chains to changing consumer expectations, especially regarding sustainability. According to the OLI (Ownership, Location, Internalization)⁷ theoretical framework, location analysis of production considers various factors such as labour costs, access to raw materials and environmental issues, all of which are crucial when making decisions about nearshoring.⁸

Changes in location strategies, which involve shortening supply chains and increasing their transparency, are increasingly a response to growing consumer demands for sustainability. According to research by Kinkel and Maloca in 2009, a cost-benefit analysis of production relocation shows that companies are

⁷ The OLI framework helps explain why and how companies internationalise, and it is widely used in the fields of international business and economics.

⁸ B. Wiesmann, J.R. Snoci, P. Hilletoft, D. Eriksson, *Drivers and Barriers to Reshoring: A Literature Review on Offshoring in Reverse*, "European Business Review" 2017, pp. 15–42; M. Johansson, J. Olhager, *Manufacturing Relocation of Plants to and from Sweden – Extent, Characteristics and Performance*, "Journal of Manufacturing Technology Management" 2018, vol. 29, no. 7, pp. 1184–1208, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMTM-01-2017-0006>, (accessed 20.06.2025).

increasingly incorporating not only economic but also social and environmental factors into their strategies.

Additionally, an integrated approach to supply chain management, which takes into account changes in technologies and production practices, allows companies to respond more effectively to dynamic market changes and consumer expectations. This approach is essential for maintaining competitiveness and ecological responsibility in an increasingly globalized world.

By shortening supply chains through nearshoring, companies can gain better control over production processes and enhance their ability to quickly adapt to changing market conditions and environmental regulations. Moreover, bringing production closer to consumers can enhance the perceived value of brands, as consumers increasingly favour products from more ethical and environmentally responsible sources.

However, managing the transition to a nearshoring model requires companies to conduct thorough market analysis, risk assessment and investments in new technologies and infrastructure necessary for efficiently managing new production locations. Companies must also consider local conditions, such as access to a skilled workforce, environmental regulations and operational costs, which are critical to the success of nearshoring strategies.

For companies interested in further exploring the topic, it is worth reviewing academic papers and industry analyses available through databases such as Emerald Insight, where detailed information on the impact of nearshoring strategies on supply chains and production management practices in the context of global crises and market changes can be found.

4. Investment and infrastructure costs

The decision to relocate production from distant countries such as China entails significant investments in new infrastructure and the need to adapt existing production processes.

Investment costs: Building or upgrading production facilities in new locations requires substantial capital investment. These investments are not limited to physical infrastructure but also include advanced manufacturing technologies necessary to maintain market competitiveness. As Smith notes, these costs can be considerable, but they are essential for executing an effective operational transformation.

Time and technical expertise: The relocation process is also time-consuming. Companies must conduct thorough market research to identify the best location in terms of market access, availability of raw materials and skilled labour. Additionally, as the literature suggests, deep technical knowledge is needed to ensure that new facilities comply with the latest technological and environmental standards. Efforts to integrate new technologies and optimise production processes are crucial for achieving operational efficiency and minimising environmental impact.

Risk and uncertainty management: Moving production also requires managing risks related to capital investments in an unstable economic environment. Companies must be prepared for market volatility and potential regulatory hurdles that could affect costs and project timelines.

Nearshoring – relocating production closer to target markets – is a key strategic decision for companies seeking to improve operational efficiency and reduce costs. However, as Smith emphasizes, this undertaking requires significant investments in new infrastructure and the adaptation of production processes, involving not only capital but also time and advanced technical expertise.⁹

This process involves comprehensive market and technological analyses, which are critical for effectively redesigning supply chains and production. For example, theoretical frameworks such as OLI (Ownership, Location, Internalization) allow companies to assess the advantages of ownership, location and internalisation, which are crucial when making decisions about offshoring or backshoring.¹⁰

Shifts in production trends are often driven by various OLI factors. These include costs, access to resources, innovation, proximity to customers and suppliers, and many other strategic considerations. Recent studies show that the dynamic global environment and economic crises, such as the 2008 financial crisis, influence companies' decisions regarding production relocation, contributing to an increase in backshoring activities, particularly among export-intensive firms.

In conclusion, managing investment and infrastructure costs in the context of nearshoring requires a complex approach that considers both short-term cost benefits and the company's long-term strategic goals. Effective management of these aspects can enhance a company's competitiveness in the global market.

⁹ J. Smith, *Challenges and Opportunities in Nearshoring*, "International Journal of Production Economics" 2021, vol. 237, pp. 245–289.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

4.1. Adapting to new markets

Adapting to new markets in the context of nearshoring is a complex process that requires companies to understand and respond to new regulatory, cultural and market conditions. Moving production activities to countries closer to target markets presents several challenges but also opens up new opportunities for growth and operational optimization.

Regulatory conditions: Adapting to local regulations is crucial to ensure operational compliance and avoid potential sanctions. Companies must stay updated on local regulations regarding production, employment, environmental protection and trade. For example, differences in CO₂ emission regulations may require technological or operational changes in production processes to meet stricter environmental standards.

Cultural differences: Understanding local culture and social norms is essential not only for human resource management but also for effective communication with customers and business partners. Business practices, such as negotiations, decision-making and communication styles can vary significantly by country. Therefore, companies must adapt their management and marketing strategies to meet local expectations and customs.¹¹

Trade barriers and consumer expectations: Differences in consumer expectations can influence product and marketing strategies. Consumers in different regions may prefer different product features, requiring companies to be flexible in adjusting their offerings. Additionally, trade barriers such as tariffs, quotas and varying certification requirements can impact product costs and availability in new markets.¹²

In the context of nearshoring, companies must conduct in-depth market research to understand these aspects and appropriately tailor their strategies. Effective adaptation can not only minimize risks but also maximize the benefits of closer collaboration with target markets.

4.2. Risk and uncertainty

Relocating production under a nearshoring strategy entails significant risks and uncertainties that companies must consider when making such a decision. These

¹¹ G. Hofstede, *Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviors, Institutions and Organizations Across Nations*, Sage Publications, California 2001, p. 98.

¹² M.E. Porter, *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, Free Press, New York 1990, p. 245.

risks and uncertainties can arise from various factors, such as changing economic, political and environmental conditions that may affect the stability and predictability of foreign operations.

Economic conditions: Currency fluctuations, inflation or a recession in the host country can significantly impact operating costs and profit margins. Variable economic conditions can also affect demand for products, requiring companies to be flexible in adapting production and sales strategies.¹³

Political risk: Changes in local or international policies, such as new trade regulations, tariffs or sanctions can hinder foreign business operations. This risk also includes potential shifts in political stability, which may impact the security of investments and personnel.¹⁴

Environmental challenges: Environmental regulations can vary from country to country and may require substantial investments in environmentally friendly technologies or changes to production processes to meet local standards. Additionally, natural disasters or other environmental crises can disrupt supply chains and production.¹⁵

Unforeseen expenses: The costs associated with establishing operations in a new location may be higher than anticipated, including initial capital investments and ongoing operational costs. Problems with system integration, employee training or technological adaptation can also generate additional expenses.¹⁶

To manage risk, companies can employ various strategies such as currency hedging, market diversification, investing in technologies that enhance production flexibility and developing crisis management plans. Effective risk management also requires continuous monitoring of both external and internal conditions to respond quickly to changing circumstances.

¹³ W.J. Henisz, *The Institutional Environment for Multinational Investment*, "Journal of Law, Economics, & Organization" 2000, vol. 16, no. 2, pp. 334–364.

¹⁴ K.D. Brouthers, *Institutional, Cultural and Transaction Cost Influences on Entry Mode Choice and Performance*, "Journal of International Business Studies" 2002, vol. 33, no. 2.

¹⁵ P.R. Kleindorfer, G.H. Saad, *Managing Disruption Risks in Supply Chains*, "Production and Operations Management" 2005, vol. 14, iss. 1.

¹⁶ G.A. Knight, S.T. Cavusgil, *Innovation, organizational capabilities, and the born-global firm*, "Journal of International Business Studies" 2004, vol. 35, pp 124–141.

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Santacreu A.M., LaBelle J., *Supply Chain Disruptions and Inflation During COVID-19*, “Economic Synopses” 2022, no. 14, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, <https://research.stlouisfed.org/publications/economic-synopses/2022/05/12/supply-chain-disruptions-and-inflation-during-covid-19>, (accessed 7.06.2025).

Summary

In the face of dynamic changes in the global market, nearshoring is becoming an increasingly important element of business strategies aimed at optimising supply chains. As the analysis in this article has shown, relocating industrial production from China to locations closer to target markets offers several benefits, including cost reduction, increased flexibility and better alignment of products with consumer demands. Although this process involves challenges such as adapting to environmental regulations or managing labour costs, the opportunities it presents are substantial.

When properly implemented, nearshoring strategies can significantly contribute to sustainable growth, enhancing companies’ competitiveness on the international stage. However, to fully realize the potential of nearshoring, companies must engage in continuous monitoring and analysis of market trends, adapting their operations to the rapidly changing conditions of the global economy. Given these facts, businesses that embrace these challenges are paving the way for innovation and growth, effectively responding to shifting consumer expectations and market demands. Nearshoring is no longer just an option but a key strategic element enabling companies to achieve long-term competitive advantage.

The growing interest in nearshoring as a key component in global strategies heralds a new era in supply chain management. As companies prioritise greater operational flexibility and shorter supply chains, nearshoring becomes an increasingly attractive option, helping to meet modern economic, environmental and social challenges.

By locating production closer to key markets, companies not only reduce delivery times and transportation costs but also increase their ability to quickly respond to changes in consumer preferences and market conditions. Nearshoring allows companies to improve operational efficiency while better aligning with regulatory requirements and social expectations concerning sustainable development.

Furthermore, relocating production can lead to significant transformation both in the internal processes of the company and its external business relationships. This requires strategic planning, innovation and continuous improvement, which can contribute to the long-term stability and growth of the company. Nearshoring offers not only operational and financial benefits but also opens doors to deeper integration and collaboration with local markets, which may be crucial for maintaining competitiveness in a rapidly changing global environment.

Decisions regarding nearshoring should be made with careful consideration of both short-term benefits and long-term growth prospects for the company. The ability to adapt and innovate in response to global challenges will determine the future of companies that choose this path, with benefits translating not only into financial success but also into greater social and environmental responsibility.

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**BEFORE CYBERTERRORISM BEGAN.
THE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM AND EQUIPMENT OF THE
FORCES FOR FRONTIER DEFENCE IN THE PROTECTION
OF THE PRL MARITIME BORDER IN THE SECOND HALF OF
THE 20TH CENTURY. SELECTED PROBLEMS. PART I**

**ZANIM POJAWIŁ SIĘ CYBERTERRORYZM. SYSTEM
I SPRZĘT ŁĄCZNOŚCI WOJSK OCHRONY POGRANICZA
W OCHRONIE GRANICY MORSKIEJ PRL W DRUGIEJ
POŁOWIE XX WIEKU. WYBRANE PROBLEMY. CZ. I**

Abstract: The article presents the functioning of communications in the protection of the Polish maritime border, which was protected by the personnel of the Border Protection Forces in the second half of the 20th century. Also discussed are selected types of communications equipment used at the time by soldiers of the formation's coastal brigades.

Zarys treści: W artykule zaprezentowano funkcjonowanie łączności w ochronie polskiej granicy morskiej, którą w drugiej połowie XX w. ochraniał personel Wojsk Ochrony

Pogranicza. Omówiono również wybrane typy sprzętu łączności wykorzystywane w tym czasie przez żołnierzy nadmorskich brygad tej formacji.

Keywords: communications in the protection of the maritime border of the People's Republic of Poland, communication equipment of the Border Protection Forces.

Słowa kluczowe: łączność w ochronie granicy morskiej PRL, sprzęt łączności Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza.

Introduction

The use of various types of technical means of communication¹ by the Border Protection Forces (WOP) in the protection of the Polish maritime border in the second half of the 20th century required the coordination of their activities during border duty by various groupings (elements) of the service of this formation. It was performed at sea for 24 hours each day, throughout the year. During this time, there were events related to normal duty as well as the elimination of border intrusions over the Baltic Sea at seaports, on the open coast or at sea.²

¹ See entry *środki łączności*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia techniki wojskowej*, Wydawnictwo MON, Warszawa 1978, p. 717.

² I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurłat, *Przestępczość graniczna w Polsce w drugiej połowie XX wieku w świetle biuletynów Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza. Od zakończenia stanu wojennego do końca lat 80. Źródła*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku, Słupsk 2021, pp. 1–274; I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurłat, *Przestępczość graniczna w Polsce w drugiej połowie XX wieku w świetle biuletynów Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza. Schyłek lat 70. i okres stanu wojennego. Źródła*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku, Słupsk 2018, pp. 1–210; also I. Bieniecki, *Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza w systemie ochrony i obrony granicy morskiej Polski w latach 1965–1991*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku, Słupsk 2015, pp. 1–480 (reviews: W. Parus, Ireneusz Bieniecki, *Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza w systemie ochrony i obrony granicy morskiej Polski w latach 1965–1991*, *Słupsk 2015*, ss. 480, “Nautologia” 2016, no. 153, pp. 97–99; I. Szkurłat, Ireneusz Bieniecki, *Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza oraz ich miejsce w systemie ochrony i obrony granicy morskiej Polski w latach 1965–1991*, *Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku*, Słupsk 2015, s. 480, “Biuletyn Problemy Ochrony Granic” 2017, no. 55, pp. 169–171; W. Parus, Ireneusz Bieniecki, *Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza oraz ich miejsce w systemie ochrony i obrony granicy morskiej Polski w latach 1965–1991*, *Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pomorskiej w Słupsku*, Słupsk 2015, s. 480, “Biuletyn Problemy Ochrony Granic” 2017, no. 55, pp. 173–177; G. Goryński, Ire-

Therefore, in the protection of the Polish maritime border functioned one of the four subsystems of the protection of the state border³, which on the coast of the People's Republic in different years included service performed by soldiers of specialized subdivisions and services including, among others:

- organs of the WOP Zwiadu WOP,⁴
- WOP port subdivisions (port battalions of WOP in Szczecin, Gdynia and Gdansk),⁵
- groupings (elements) of non-uniformed service ("N" – unclassified) WOP,⁶
- manning coastal radio-location stations (r./lok) of WOP coastal watchtowers,⁷

neusz Bieniecki, Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza w systemie ochrony i obrony granicy morskiej Polski w latach 1965–1991, Akademia Pomorska, Słupsk 2015, ss. 480, "Scripta Historica" 2017, no 23, pp. 311–318).

³ I. Bieniecki, *Nadmorskie Brygady WOP i Morska Brygada Okrętów Pogranicza w systemie obrony wybrzeża w okresie zagrożenia i wojny w latach 1965–1991. Stan sił i możliwości ich wykorzystania*, in: A. Drzewiecki (ed.), *Konflikt zbrojny na Bałtyku w koncepcjach ideologii zimnowojennej po 1945 roku. Materiały z konferencji naukowej zorganizowanej (25 listopada 2004 r.) przez Akademię Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni*, Wydawnictwo AMW w Gdyni, Gdynia 2005, pp. 137–153.

⁴ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurlat, *Zwiad Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w zabezpieczeniu polskiej granicy morskiej w latach 1960–1991*, in: P. Kołakowski, B. Sprengel, M. Stefański, J. Zawadzki (eds.), *W cieniu służb. Ze studiów nad bezpieczeństwem państwa*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek w Toruniu, Toruń 2016, pp. 387–411; I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurlat, *Zwiad Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1960–1991 (zadania, organizacja, personel i jego działalność w ochronie granicy PRL)*, in: M. Górka (ed.), *Służby wywiadowcze jako element polskiej polityki bezpieczeństwa. Historia i współczesność*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek w Toruniu, Toruń 2016, pp. 299–335; I. Bieniecki, *Operacyjno-rozpoznawcza działalność Zwiadu Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza na polskim wybrzeżu morskim w latach 1960–1991*, in: A. Krzak, D. Gibas-Krzak (eds.), *Służby specjalne w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa. Przeszłość – Teraźniejszość – Przyszłość. Materiały i studia*, vol. 1, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego i Wojskowego Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej, Szczecin–Warszawa 2012, pp. 457–482; I. Bieniecki, *Zwiad Nadmorskich Brygad Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1965–1991. Zadania – struktura – działalność*, in: M. Ilnicki, A. Piotrowski (eds.), *Edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa. Służby specjalne w systemie bezpieczeństwa państwa. Praktyczne aspekty bezpieczeństwa*, vol. 1, Wydawnictwo WSB w Poznaniu, Poznań 2012, pp. 147–178.

⁵ I. Bieniecki, *Ochrona granicy na terenie portów morskich przez żołnierzy Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1965–1991. Wybrane problemy*, "Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej" 2007, no. 1, pp. 228–252.

⁶ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurlat, *Służba niemundurowa Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1958–1991. Wyższy szczebel służby liniowej czy namiastka służby rozpoznawczej?*, "Scripta Historica" 2017, no. 23, pp. 277–298.

⁷ I. Bieniecki, *Podsystem obserwacji i radiolokacyjnego dozoru Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w ochronie granicy morskiej PRL w latach 1960–1970*, "Biuletyn Historyczny Muzeum

- grouping of soldiers equipped with service dogs,⁸
- personnel of the Independent Reconnaissance Air Squadron (SELR) of WOP,⁹
- sailors of vessels of coastal WOP Brigades (Pomorska BWOP in Szczecin (4 Żołnierska Street), Bałtycka BWOP in Koszalin (22 Armii Czerwonej Street) and Kaszubska BWOP in Gdańsk-Nowy Port (35 Oliwska Street)),¹⁰

Marynarki Wojennej” 2016, no. 31, pp. 171–192; I. Bieniecki, *Obserwacja i radiolokacyjny dozór Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza na polskim wybrzeżu morskim w latach 1960–1991. Powstanie – rozwój – organizacja, cz. 1*, “Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej” 2011, no. 3 (58), pp. 73–90; I. Bieniecki, *Obserwacja i radiolokacyjny dozór Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza na polskim wybrzeżu morskim w latach 1960–1991. Powstanie – rozwój – organizacja, cz. 2*, “Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej” 2011, no. 4 (59), pp. 71–87; I. Bieniecki, *Obserwacja i radiolokacyjny dozór Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza na polskim wybrzeżu morskim w latach 1960–1991. Powstanie – rozwój – organizacja, cz. 3*, “Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej” 2012, no. 1–2 (60–61), pp. 99–118; I. Bieniecki, *Obserwacja i radiolokacja w ochronie polskiej granicy morskiej w latach 1960–1991*, in: P. Kurlenda, J. Romanowicz, A. Rossa i B. Zalewski (eds.), *Siły Zbrojne – Polityka. Studia ofiarowane profesorowi Jerzemu Przybylskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 2005, pp. 43–61.

- ⁸ I. Bieniecki, *Szkolenie i wykorzystanie psów służbowych w ochronie polskich granic (1945–1991)*, “Studia nad Bezpieczeństwem” 2016, no. 1, pp. 113–128; I. Bieniecki, *Potrzeba chwili czy wyższa konieczność? Szkolenie i wykorzystanie psów służbowych w ochronie granicy w latach 1945–1991 w świetle dokumentów Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza*, in: J. Tymieniecka-Suchanek (ed.), *Człowiek w relacji do zwierząt, roślin i maszyn w kulturze*, vol. 2, *Od humanizmu do posthumanizmu*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, Katowice 2014, pp. 411–423.
- ⁹ I. Bieniecki, *Lotnictwo Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w zabezpieczeniu granicy morskiej PRL (1958–1991)*, in: S. Januszewski, A. Olejko (eds.), *Morskie skrzydła Polski*, Drukarnia-wydawnictwo STUDIO edytor, Wrocław 2020, pp. 89–102; I. Bieniecki, *Samoloty i śmigłowce Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w ochronie polskiej granicy morskiej w latach 1958–1991*, “Śląskie Studia Historyczne” 2007, no. 13, pp. 111–133; I. Bieniecki, *Wykorzystanie samolotów i śmigłowców WOP w ochronie granicy morskiej w latach 1958–1991*, “Nautologia” 2007, no. 144, pp. 83–93; I. Bieniecki, *Rozpoznanie lotnicze w ochronie polskiej granicy morskiej w latach 1958–1991*, in: K. Radwan (ed.), *Środkowo-europejskie dziedzictwo lotnicze*, Wydawnictwo Muzeum Lotnictwa Polskiego, Kraków 2005, pp. 20–39; I. Bieniecki, *Eskadra lotnictwa rozpoznawczego Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza (1958–1970), cz. 1*, “Przegląd Wojsk Lotniczych i Obrony Powietrznej” 1999, no. 4, pp. 93–97; I. Bieniecki, *Eskadra lotnictwa rozpoznawczego Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza (1958–1970), cz. 2*, “Przegląd Wojsk Lotniczych i Obrony Powietrznej” 1999, no. 6, pp. 81–85.
- ¹⁰ I. Bieniecki, *Jednostki pływające Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza i ich wykorzystanie na rzecz bezpieczeństwa granicy morskiej PRL w drugiej połowie XX wieku*, “Studia nad Bezpieczeństwem” 2019, no. 4, pp. 77–93; I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurłat, *Koncepcja i wykorzystanie kutrów pościgowych typu „SZKWAL” przez Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza w drugiej*

- as well as sailors of border ship squadrons of the Maritime Border Ship Brigade (DOP MBOP – in Szczecin, Swinoujście, Darłowo/Kołobrzeg and Gdansk-Westerplatte).¹¹

The aforementioned forces and means operated from 13 September 1945 to 15 May 1991 within the framework of a unified system for the protection of the maritime border of the People's Republic of Poland, the task of which was to prevent the unauthorised crossing of the national border, and in the event of such an occurrence, to respond to it without delay. The forces and resources operating within this system complemented each other and required uniform command and close cooperation between each other, which could only be ensured by using technical means of communication due to the conditions prevailing in the area, and was mainly radio communication.¹²

On the coast radio communication was the primary and only effective means of communication, especially in the typically naval (Navy – MW, WOP) and aviation subdivisions of this formation. In aviation subdivisions, in addition to securing normal tasks resulting from operational assumptions, radio communications simultaneously served to ensure flight safety.¹³ It was unacceptable for an

połowie XX wieku, "Logistyka" 2015, no. 4 (article on CD no. 2), pp. 1569–1579.

¹¹ I. Bieniecki, *Charakterystyka jednostek pływających Morskiej Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza w latach 1965–1991, cz. 1*, "Okręty Wojenne" 2011, no. 108 (4), pp. 82–89; I. Bieniecki, *Charakterystyka jednostek pływających Morskiej Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza w latach 1965–1991, cz. 2*, "Okręty Wojenne" 2011, no. 109 (5), pp. 78–89; I. Bieniecki, *Jednostki pływające Morskiej Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza w latach 1966–1991*, "Biuletyn Historyczny Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni" 2009, no. 24, pp. 172–191; I. Bieniecki, *Wykorzystanie jednostek pływających Morskiej Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza w ochronie polskiej granicy morskiej w latach 1965–1971*, "Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego" 2008, iss. 47, pp. 54–67; I. Bieniecki, *Morska Brygada Okrętów Pogranicza (1966–1991)*, "Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej" 2002, no. 3–4, pp. 96–113; I. Bieniecki, *Morska Brygada Okrętów Pogranicza (1966–1991)*, "Przegląd Morski" 2002, no. 7–8, pp. 39–52; I. Bieniecki, *Jednostki pływające Morskiej Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza i ich wykorzystanie w ochronie granicy morskiej w latach 1966–1991*, in: J. Przybylski, B. Zalewski (eds.), *Militarne i gospodarcze aspekty polityki morskiej Polski XX wieku*, Wydawnictwo AMW, Gdynia 2001, pp. 177–188; I. Bieniecki, *Morska Brygada Okrętów Pogranicza w latach 1966–1991*, in: Cz. Ciesielski (ed.), *Szkice z najnowszych dziejów*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego, Gdańsk 1997, pp. 69–78.

¹² Radio communication is organised by means of radio equipment (radio stations, transmitters, receivers) which work in a specific system according to predetermined rules. See the entry *łączość radiowa*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., pp. 339–400; see also the entry *łączość wojskowa*, ibidem, pp. 341–342.

¹³ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurląt, *Wypadki lotnicze w Samodzielnej Eskadrze Lotnictwa Rozpo-*

aircraft or helicopter to be in the air, especially over the sea, without communications. Even in the event of a loss of communication during the performance of official tasks, it was the pilot's duty to immediately take all necessary measures to re-establish it (increase the flight altitude, reduce the distance, etc.). If this was not sufficient, the pilot would abort the task and return to home or the nearest base. The same applied to crews of vessels on duty at sea.

By the early 1960s the issue of maintaining radio communications in the DOP was essentially solved. At that time, green-flag vessels had sufficient KF and UKF radios on board, which operated simultaneously on several radio networks¹⁴ and had emergency stations at their disposal. This guaranteed that their commanders could communicate with their superior at any time.

Organization of the Border Protection Forces in 1945–1991

WOP operated from the end of hostilities, i.e., 13 September 1945, until 16 May 1991, when it was replaced by a new formation: the modern Border Guard (SG).¹⁵ During this period, depending on the subordination (under the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Defence) and the official tasks carried out, the organizational structure of the units of this formation and the tasks performed by them changed.

For example, in the mid-1960s, further changes were made to the organizational structure of the WOP and the former WOP Command (DWOP in Warsaw, 100 Niepodległości Avenue) and its subordinate units were subordinated to the Chief Inspector of Territorial Defence (GIOT) of the Ministry of Defence – Lieutenant General Grzegorz Korczyński – by a decision of the Committee for National Defence (CND) on 6 March 1965. On the other hand, as of 1 July 1965,

znawczego Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza (1961–1970), “Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej” 2014, no. 4 (71), pp. 7–34.

¹⁴ A communications network is a set of equipment and elements designed to provide telephonic, telegraphic, teletype, television communications, as well as the transmission of telemetry signals and data and data transmission. See the entry *sieć łączności*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., p. 630.

¹⁵ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurłat, *30 lat Straży Granicznej RP (1991–2021). Ugrupowania służby granicznej w ochronie polskiej granicy państwowej w świetle „Instrukcji służby granicznej z 1992 r.”*, in: M. Delong, O. Jurgilewicz, B. Kozicki (eds.), *Transgraniczny wymiar współczesnego bezpieczeństwa. Wybrane zagadnienia*, Oficyna Wydawnictwo Politechniki Rzeszowskiej, Rzeszów 2022, pp. 47–71.

the formation was subordinated to MON in terms of command. Subordination in economic terms took place from 1 January 1966. Together with the WOP, the Internal Security Corps (ISC) was incorporated into the MON. However, the Ministry of the Interior still retained the border crossings.¹⁶ Thus, a new system of command of WOP units was created through the General Staff of the Army, the Inspectorate of Territorial Defence and the WOP Headquarters. At the same time, the entire supply of WOP units was taken over by military districts (OW) under the Ministry of Defence (MoD).¹⁷

As of the mid-1960s, WOP forces stationed on the coast accounted for a significant percentage of the total formation. Out of a total of 24,695 WOP soldiers, as many as 37.3% (9,218) personnel were on duty in coastal units. On the coast, as a result of organizational changes, out of the total WOP forces of 9,218 soldiers (100%) the majority, or as many as 93.5% (8,616) passed into the subordination of the Pomeranian Military District (POW) and only 6.5% (602) remained in the Interior Ministry.¹⁸

By an order of the Ministry of Defence (No. 017/MON of 27 July 1965 on temporary terms of reference), the position of Chief Inspector of National Defence (GIOT) was created. He reported directly to the Minister of Defence and directed the preparation of the land defence of the national territory, the activities of the Internal Troops (WW) and OT units, the preparation of field command posts of the chief state bodies, and coordinated undertakings for the general defence preparation of society. The WW included the Internal Defence Troops (WOWewn) subordinate to the GIOT directly or through the commanders of the OW, and the WOP subordinate directly to the GIOT.¹⁹

¹⁶ Border crossing – place designated for crossing the state border. It included a defined section of road crossing the state border, the area of a border railway station, an airport or part thereof, a defined part of a sea or river port. The territorial extent of a border crossing in the PRL was determined by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Border crossing points were distinguished: road, rail, air, sea and river. See the entry *przejście graniczne*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon wiedzy wojskowej*, Wydawnictwo MON, Warszawa 1979, p. 340.

¹⁷ H. Dominiczak, *Powstanie i rozwój organizacyjny Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1945–1983*, Wydawnictwo ASW, Warszawa 1984, pp. 69–70.

¹⁸ G. Goryński, *Organizacja ochrony granicy morskiej Polski przez Wojska Ochrony Pogranicza w latach 1949–1965* [PhD thesis defended at the Faculty of Philology and History, University of Gdańsk in 1999], Gdańsk 1999, pp. 318–319.

¹⁹ Archiwum Straży Granicznej (hereafter ASG) w Szczecinie, Akta Szefostwa WOP, ref. no. 1841, vol. 3, Zarządzenie MON nr 017-MON z 27.07.1965 r. w sprawie tymczasowego zakresu kompetencji GIOT, p. 1; Archiwum Instytucji MON (hereafter AIMON) w Modlinie, Akta GIOT, ref. no. 21/91, vol. 147, Referat zastępcy GIOT – szefa

On the other hand, in accordance with an order from the Ministry of Defence, Marshal Marian Spychalski (No. 0114/Org. of November 23, 1965), in connection with the subordination of the WW to this ministry, the Chief of General Staff was ordered to issue an organizational order by 15 December 1965 on the formation of a Border Ship Brigade (BOP), on the basis of the hitherto existing WOP naval units. The formed BOP was to be commanded by the commander of the MW from 1 January 1966. It was also his responsibility to supervise the operation and repair of equipment and specialized training in this unit.²⁰

Implementing the above-mentioned order of the Ministry of Defence on the reorganization of WOP naval units and the orders issued on its basis by the Chief of General Staff (No. 0135/Org. of 22 December 1965) and GIOT (No. 028/Org. of 25 February 1966), the 6th Border Ship Brigade (BOP) was formed on 1 April 1966, headquartered in Gdańsk-Nowy Port (35 Oliwska St.). The staff of this new unit was formed on the basis of the former WOP Marine Service Headquarters. At the same time, from the composition of the coastal BWOPs, i.e., the 12th, 15th and 16th BWOPs, border ship squadrons (DOPs) were separated, which, together with the School of Marine Specialists WOP (SSM WOP),²¹ which was previously an independent unit, was subordinated to the new unit.²² After a year of operation of the 6th BOP, the unit's name was changed by order of the head of Territorial Defence (No. 98/org.). From 15 April 1967, it functioned as the Maritime Border Ship Brigade (MBOP).²³

In contrast, in mid-1970, WOP with a force of about 20,000 soldiers protected a state border of 3,398 kilometres. At that time, the borders of the People's Republic of Poland (maritime, eastern, southern and western) were secured

Inspektoratu Powszechnej Samoobrony gen. bryg. A. Cesarskiego na temat „Rozwój obronności PRL ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem obrony terytorialnej kraju” z 19.11.1969, pp. 9–10.

²⁰ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta DWOP, ref. no. 2369, vol. 4, Rozkaz MON nr 0114/Org. z 23.11.1965 r. (odpis), p. 1.

²¹ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkurłat, *Szkoła Specjalistów Morskich Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza i jej rola w przygotowaniu personelu dla potrzeb obronności kraju w latach 1950–1967*, “Security, Economy and Law” 2017, no. 4 (17), pp. 18–46 [digital edition]; I. Bieniecki, *Szkoła Specjalistów Morskich Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza (1950–1967)*, “Biuletyn Historyczny Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni” 2001, no. 17, pp. 95–102.

²² AIMON w Modlinie, Akta GIOT, ref. no. 21/91, vol. 142, Notatka służbowa szefa ZP WW płk. mgr. J. Puławskiego dotycząca 6. Brygady Okrętów Pogranicza z 10.05.1966 r., p. 1.

²³ S. Fręsko, *Morska Brygada Okrętów Pogranicza w latach 1966–1991*, “Przegląd Morski” 1992, no. 2, p. 37.

by 8 WOP land brigades (BWOP), MBOP and 4 WOP units (OWOP). The organization of each unit of this formation depended on the ethnographic and demographic character of the region in which it operated and the degree of criminal threat to the section of the protected border. Therefore, BWOP's manpower levels averaged 1,300–3,200 personnel, while WOP's and OWOPs were smaller, ranging from 360–640. BWOP protected the maritime, PRL–NRD and PRL–CSRS borders, while OWOP protected the PRL–Soviet border.

The organization of each BWOP consisted of: command (commander and his deputies), staff (operations department, training section, communications department or section, org.-mob. section and chancellery), political department with soldier's club, reconnaissance department, human resources section, service chiefs (engineering, chemical and financial) and technical department (vehicle and armament section). The supply apparatus was the quartermaster's office, the Military Garrison Administration (WAG – section of finance, supply company and sick bay). In the group of staff subdivisions there was a communications company (k.), a sapper k. or platoon, a chemical platoon or team and a guard k. or platoon. The BWOP's reserve was a reserve battalion (bo), which included: a command k. (reconnaissance platoon, traffic regulation platoon and communications platoon), 1–3 infantry k. (3 platoons each) and a transport team.

The MBOP (formerly the 6th BOP) did not have a separate section of the state border to protect and carried out tasks for the benefit of the three coastal BWOPs (Pomorska BWOP – Szczecin, Bałtycka BWOP – Koszalin and Kaszubska BWOP – Gdańsk-Nowy Port). It had three squadrons of border ships (DOP – Swinoujście, Kołobrzeg and Gdańsk-Westerplatte).²⁴

At that time, the WOP had the following watchtowers: land, technical, river and coastal. On the maritime border there were four types of coastal watchtowers, depending on the number of Visual and Technical Observation Posts (POWTs) and visual and technical observation teams (2–5 teams). For example, in the structure of a WOP type I watchtower there were: the watchtower command (commander, deputy for political affairs and chief of the watchtower), 5 visual-technical observation teams, a command team and an economic team (5 POWTs and 2 passenger-terrain vehicles) totalling 71 soldiers.²⁵

²⁴ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta DWOP, ref. no. 1841, vol. 9, Informacja o węzłowych problemach ochrony granic PRL nr 03156 wykonana przez ppłk. Kasprzyszaka 24.06.1970 r., p. 5.

²⁵ Ibidem, p. 7.

At the time, the headquarters of the three coastal BWOPs were responsible for 17 watchtowers, each of which secured an average length section of 23.5 kilometres. Along the coast there was an observation system consisting of 58 WOP POWTs. The sections of each unit were active in:

- Pomeranian BWOP-6 POWT (1 tower for 8.1 km of protected section),
- Baltic BWOP-27 POWT (1 tower for 6.6 km of protected section),
- Kashubian BWOP-25 POWT (1 tower for 9.4 km of protected section).

In the total number of 58th POWTs, two stations r./lok. (POWTs in the town of Podgrodzie and the town of Wydrzany) protected the border line running along the Szczecin Lagoon.

In this period, 5,594 BWOP soldiers were engaged to protect the maritime border (full-time), including: 647 officers, 252 professional non-commissioned officers and 4,698 soldiers of basic military service (zsw). Of all the subdivisions, in terms of the number of soldiers, the most numerous were the service subdivisions (at BWOP headquarters) and the port battalions (bport).²⁶

The MBOP and the SELR WOP cooperated with the coastal BWOP in protecting the maritime border. The MBOP command was stationed in Gdansk-Nowy Port and three subdivisions were subordinate to it: 30th DOP in Swinoujście, 31st DOP in Gdansk-Westerplatte and 32nd DOP in Kolobrzeg. The full-time composition of the MBOP at the time was 968 personnel.²⁷

The article below presents the organization of communications in WOP subdivisions protecting the maritime border of the People's Republic of Poland, as well as selected radio and wire communications equipment used in the period 1945–1991.

Terminological arrangements

In the second half of the 20th century the term communications system²⁸ was defined as a set of communications nodes, stations and separate communications equipment connected to each other in a specific way by transmission routes,

²⁶ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta Szefostwa WOP, ref. no. 2368, vol. 4, Analiza sytuacji operacyjnej na odcinku granicy morskiej w latach 1961–1965 oraz wnioski i propozycje w sprawie organizacji jej ochrony w latach 1966–1970 z 10.10.1968 r., p. 36.

²⁷ Ibidem, p. 36.

²⁸ Entry *system łączności*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 426; see also entry *system łączności*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., p. 697.

together with multiplier, switching, terminal, repeater and other specialized and auxiliary equipment. The communications system provided for the exchange of information in the command (command and management) system of the armed forces or part thereof.

The term was also used to describe the operation of communications equipment (or a set of such equipment), determined by the main electrical or design features of the equipment (or set of equipment), such as frequency, power, type of modulation or number of communication channels.

On the other hand, the concept of wired communications²⁹ is understood as communications using wires (cables) as a transmission route for transmitting and receiving signals over a distance. A distinction was made between wired communications: telephone, telegraph, telecopy and television. Depending on the wires (cables) and line and station equipment used, it could be single or multi-channel communications. Wired communications were organized in combat situations that allowed the construction (development) and use of wired lines. For organizational reasons, long-distance wire communications (between command posts) and internal communications (within a command post or headquarters) were distinguished. Long-distance wire communications were organized on directions and axes.

In turn, radio communications³⁰ was defined as communications using radios (radio transmitters and receivers) working according to strict rules. It enabled the exchange of information between commanders at all levels. Depending on the terminal apparatus used, radio communications were distinguished: telephone, telegraphic (auditory and long-distance), telecopy and television. Radio communications were used from the level of the subdivision (WOP-guard) upwards and allowed simultaneous transmission of orders, reports and various signals to several commanders and headquarters. Depending on the situation, capabilities and needs, radio communications were organized on: directions, radio networks or a subscriber system. The extent of the use of radio communications during combat operations was determined by the superior staff, according to current needs and the combat situation.

²⁹ Entry *łączność przewodowa*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 204; see also entry *łączność przewodowa*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., p. 339.

³⁰ Entry *łączność radiowa*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 204; see also entry *łączność radiowa*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., pp. 339–340.

A radio network³¹ was a set of several radio stations operating on a single operating frequency. One of these radio stations was the main radio station, and its operator decided who could conduct radio correspondence with whom and when in a given network. In aviation, a distinction was made between air and ground command radio networks, among others.

The direction of communications³² called direct communication between two communication nodes or subscribers (correspondents) by specific means of communications. On the other hand, the axis of connectivity³³ was the main line of communication; wired, radiolink or wired-radiolink, which was developed in the course of army operations along the direction of movement of command posts. Connected to it were the communications nodes (ON) of the command posts, which were its main support points. From the communications axis, communications directions could be developed to the command posts of subordinate or cooperating unions and divisions, or directions between the communications axes of neighbouring and superior operational unions.

Development of the communication system of WOP formations until 1991

In the mid-1950s, one of the most important reorganizations of the formation took place in the WOP, which also concerned the communications service. In accordance with the etiquettes introduced, a new organizational structure began to function, in which there were operational groups. As a result, there was a need to reorganize the existing radio communications system. For the purposes of the service, five radio networks and one radio direction were introduced in this system.³⁴

In the radio network of the WOP Brigade headquarters (BWOP) two types of radios worked:

- radio station t. RSB-staff of BWOP,

³¹ Entry *sieć radiowa*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., pp. 394–395; see also entry *sieć radiowa*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., p. 630.

³² Entry *kierunek łączności*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 165.

³³ M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 292; see also entry *oś łączności*, in: J. Modrzewski et al. (eds.), *Encyklopedia...*, op. cit., p. 464.

³⁴ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta OS WOP, ref. no. 723, vol. 27, Pismo w sprawie organizacji łączności radiowej szefa sztabu WOP płk. E. Buchwało do szefów sztabów BWOP z 11.01.1955 r., pp. 1–2.

- radio station t. RSB-staff of individual WOP battalions.

Work on this network was organized in cases where there were interruptions in wired (telephone) communications, between the BWOP headquarters and the headquarters of the WOP battalions. This network was used for training purposes, for the purpose of transmitting within the framework of conducted screenings-exercise radiograms.

The operational radio network of the BWOP headquarters consisted of the following radio stations:

- t. RSB radio station in car – commander of the manoeuvring group,
- t. RBM-1 radio station³⁵ – BWOP commanders,
- radio station t. RSB-staff of BWOP.

This network was activated in situations of border operations. Into this network could enter with its code name, if necessary, the radio station of t. RSB-staff of the battalion in whose territory the operations were conducted.

The manoeuvre group commander's operational radio network consisted of the following radio stations:

- radio t. RBM-1 manoeuvre group commanders,
- radio t. RBM-1 company commanders.

This network operated during manoeuvre group exercises for operational tasks. The company commander's radio station, which simultaneously operated its own network to relay messages to the manoeuvre group commander, entered this network with its code name. However, in BWOP, where the communications company had a larger number of radio forces and resources, a t. RBM-1 radio station was additionally assigned for company commanders in the manoeuvre group, along with staff.

Company commanders' radio networks functioned as follows:

- radio t. RBM-1 company commanders,
- radio t. RBM-1 platoon commanders.

The aforementioned radio networks worked in cases where a WOP manoeuvre group went into the field. The manoeuvre group commander could enter each network with his permanent code name. Also, the BWOP commander's radio station could enter the network with its codename.

The operational radio network of the WOP battalion headquarters consisted of:

- radio station t. RSB stationary-staff of the WOP battalion,

³⁵ *Nadajniki demobilowe*, "Świat Radio", kwiecień 2015, p. 34.

- radio station t. RBM-1-commander of the operational group of the WOP battalion.

This network worked when operational activities were conducted in the area of a given WOP battalion. The radio stations of the BWOP commander and manoeuvre group commander could enter this network with their code names.

Radio direction of interaction included radio stations:

- radio station t. RBM-1-commanders of the manoeuvre group,
- radio station t. RBM-1-commanders of the manoeuvre group of neighbouring BWOPs.

This direction functioned during joint actions carried out at the junction or in the area of one of the BWOPs. In such a case, a radio station was assigned for the commander of the manoeuvre group, along with a staff from the communications company. Radio communication of cooperation in the case of operational actions at the junctions of WOP battalions, inside the BWOP and at the junctions of neighbouring BWOP battalions was maintained by the way of entering correspondents with their code names into the operational network of the WOP battalion on whose territory the action was conducted.

Radio data for the direction of interaction was developed by the head of communications for the right neighbour. In order to secure the interaction of contact of WOP battalions of neighbouring BWOPs, the exchange of traffic elements of the networks of these battalions was carried out.

Due to the fact that at that time the BWOPs did not have enough forces and resources necessary to launch all operational networks, the work of those networks that were necessary was organized to secure the pursuit management in the BWOP and WOP battalion. Only upon receipt of appropriate radio equipment was it recommended to organize the remaining radio networks³⁶.

Another organizational change in the communications system was introduced in early 1966 by the Chief of the General Staff, in connection with the transition of WOP to the Ministry of Defence. In accordance with the relevant (Order No. 01 of 5 January 1966, effective 31 January 1966), a number of changes in the organization of MON communications with regard to WOP and WOWewn occurred. In terms of wired communications with compounds, branches, training units of WOP and WOWewn, telephone communications were carried out in the system of garrison communications nodes (GW³)³⁷ of the Ministry of Defence,

³⁶ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta OSWOP, ref. no. 723, vol. 27, Pismo w sprawie organizacji łączności radiowej..., op. cit., pp. 1–2.

³⁷ Communications nodes were among the basic elements of the military communications

while telegraph communications were carried out through the Ministry of Defence's GW³ telegraph exchanges.

To this end, it was ordered to connect the communications nodes of the coastal BWOPs in Szczecin, Koszalin and Gdansk by four telephone links and one telegraph link with the respective garrison communications nodes. Of this number, two telephone links were ordered to terminate at the intercity exchange and the remaining two were intended for the cooperation of the automatic exchange.³⁸

In the mid-1960s, the functioning of radio communications in WOP was also tested practically during exercises with troops³⁹. An example of this type of action was the alarm that was sounded in the Kashubian BWOP communications company in Gdansk Nowy Port and exercises with forces and means of communication in the KBWOP alarm area in the town of Leżno on 15 March 1967.⁴⁰ The exercise was personally directed by the then head of the Communications and Radiocommunications Department of the WOP KB, Lieutenant

system. They were developed in garrisons and in field conditions, in the areas of command posts. Depending on the level of command, a communications node consisted of: telephone switchboard (station), telegraph switchboard (station), switching room, telephone call room, military postal station, airstrip for aeroplanes and communication helicopters, data and information transmission and receiving apparatuses separate radio stations and radio receivers, group(s) of transmitting means (or transmitting and receiving centre – CNIo) as a radio node, radio line stations, command and staff vehicles, apparatuses with field mail equipment and others. See entry *węzeł łączności*, in: M. Laprus et al. (eds.), *Leksykon...*, op. cit., p. 476.

³⁸ Archiwum Wojsk Lądowych (hereafter AWL) w Toruniu, Akta Oddziału I Sztabu POW, ref. no. 116/68, vol. 27, Zarządzenie szefa Sztabu POW gen. bryg. J. Stebelskiego w sprawie organizacji łączności z jednostkami WOP i WOW na terenie POW nr 06/Sztab. z 29.01.1966 r., pp. 1–4.

³⁹ I. Bieniecki, I. Szkułat, *Siły i środki formacji ochrony granic PRL w ćwiczeniach wojskowych na wybrzeżu w latach 80. XX wieku*, in: W. Bartoszek, Ł. Nadolski (eds.), *Wojny i konflikty zbrojne po 1945 roku. Zbiór studiów*, vol. 9, Wydawnictwo Muzeum Wojsk Lądowych w Bydgoszczy, Bydgoszcz 2022, pp. 265–286; I. Bieniecki, I. Szkułat, *Siły i środki ochrony granic PRL w ćwiczeniach wojskowych na wybrzeżu w latach 70. XX wieku*, in: W. Bartoszek, Ł. Nadolski (eds.), *Wojny i konflikty zbrojne...*, op. cit., vol. 8, pp. 175–206; I. Bieniecki, I. Szkułat, *Siły i środki ochrony granic PRL w ćwiczeniach wojskowych na wybrzeżu w latach 60. XX wieku*, in: W. Bartoszek, Ł. Nadolski (eds.), *Wojny i konflikty zbrojne...*, op. cit., vol. 7, pp. 33–84; I. Bieniecki, *Jednostki ochrony granic PRL w wybranych ćwiczeniach wojskowych na wybrzeżu w latach 1965–1991*, "Biuletyn Historyczny Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni" 2014, no. 29, pp. 181–200.

⁴⁰ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta KB WOP, ref. no. 1629, vol. 43, Sprawozdanie z przebiegu alarmu w kompanii łączności oraz ćwiczenia z siłami i środkami łączności przeprowadzonymi w rejonie alarmowym KB WOP w m. Leżno w dniu 15.03.1967 r., pp. 209–210.

Colonel Julian Kąty, with the participation of the officers of the communications section, i.e., Maj. Mieczysław Paradowski, Maj. Stefan Paradowski and Capt. Edward Kaleta and based on the exercise plan and alarm documentation of the Communications and Radiocommunications Department of the WOP KB. The sequence of events of this alarm was as follows.

The alarm for the communications company was ordered at 5:15 a.m. In military terms, it proceeded in accordance with the rules adopted in BWOP. According to the alarm documentation, the entire communications company was covered. The subdivision reached combat readiness at 6.15 am, setting off the means and forces of communications intended for mobilisation in wheeled vehicles and on foot (105 soldiers), including: 7 officers, 3 professional NCOs, 10 zsw NCOs and 85 zsw privates. One NCO and 22 privates were left to operate the Communications Node (WŁ) and the Receiving Centre (CO). In addition, communication means were secured for the various units that moved to the Alert Area (RA): reconnaissance group (G+1.10), foot unit (G+1.30) and wheeled unit (G+2).

In the opinion of the inspectors, the emergency documentation developed for the unit's communications and radiolocation department was viable and useful. However, it was not fully brought to the attention of the cadres and soldiers of communications, especially the functional persons of the WŁ and CO. Supporting documents such as a diagram of communications organization for the head of the WŁ, sketches for the construction of longer communications directions and radio cryptonyms with alarm signals were not made or updated based on it.

Failure to bring the above-mentioned documentation to their attention resulted, among other things, in the duty officers of the various elements (groupings) of the WŁ and CO not knowing their duties, as a result of which they performed them poorly during the ordered alarm. The commander of the WŁ and the commander of the telephone exchange, who did not even report to their superiors on the state of communications, also failed to perform their tasks during the initial period.

Radio communications during the march were maintained as intended, securing the smooth march of the troops. However, the radio operators, upon receiving the emergency signal, did not acknowledge it from the site, nor did they notify their commanders.

Radio communications in the alert area, maintained by t. R-108 radios, secured the command and interaction of its various elements (commander, staff, quartermaster command post-KSD and foot units). However, due to damage to two t. R-108 radios, they were replaced by t. R-6411 radios. The work of

the radio-telephone operators was assessed as poor, as they could not cope with working over longer distances, did not know how to use other networks when necessary, and did not know their correspondents well, due in part to inadequate radio data and poor knowledge of them.

Radio communication via FM was maintained only with CO KB WOP (Gdańsk-Nowy Port, ul. Oliwska 35), and via CO with subordinate WOP watch-towers, more than an hour after arrival at the RA. The lack of direct communication with border subdivisions was also considered a shortcoming, despite the use of an elevated antenna. Even communication with KB WOP barracks (Gdańsk Nowy Port, ul. Oliwska 35) was not obtained from t. RSB radio station, the reason being a damaged generator.

On the other hand, from the radio station t. R-118 communication was established after an hour of time only with the KB WOP barracks, while the radio station of the Baltic BWOP (Koszalin) and the radio station of the Ministry of Defence did not answer. Moreover, the car radio stations were not masked and their protection was not organised.

As for wired communication in the alert area (without RW³), it was established after one hour and 20 minutes (less important internal directions were abandoned and external directions were not built). Its performance was assessed as good. There were also no major technical faults, with the exception of poor team chemistry, inadequate masking of cables and their protection from being connected to telephone sets.

The final conclusions recommended that:

- Consider the possibility of changing the exercise RA, by bringing it closer to the border subdivisions,
- The cadre of the communications section and company brought the documentation and the emergency instructions of the communications and radiolocation department to the full knowledge of the relevant functionaries, especially at the ON and CO, and their observance in practice. Also instructed to complete the supporting documentation necessary for the organisation of communications,
- Bring communications equipment, including generators, into full working order and combat readiness, using driver-electromechanics. Develop the initiative towards improvements such as appropriate adaptation of the workshop, cables, communications equipment and devices and field line tools for field work,

- Conduct systematic training in the field on radio and wire communications equipment and develop wire directions to harmonise crews, and pay particular attention to the work of radio and radio-telegraphists.⁴¹

In the second half of the 1960s special importance in the WOP formation was attached to the organisation of communications in the area of the Gulf of Gdańsk, which was the central area of activity of this military unit. This was dictated by the very high traffic of vessels in this area and the presence of a large number of communication means belonging to uniformed services (WOP, MW, WOPK and MSW).

This problem gained particular importance after the creation of the 6th BOP (later MBOP). Therefore, it required making appropriate arrangements in organisation of the command and cooperation in this area, which was done by the heads of communication departments of the 6th BOP and KB WOP.⁴²

In 1967, it was agreed in this respect that before the border on the Bay of Gdansk – on the so-called ‘new straight’ – could be protected⁴³ it would be necessary to move from POWT WOP Jantar one radio t. FM-302 and one radio t. R-609 and install them on POWT Łysica. It was also ordered that the four radio-telephone operators necessary to operate this equipment be transferred to this subdivision. From then on, the service tasks performed by the

⁴¹ Ibidem, pp. 209–210.

⁴² ASG w Szczecinie, Akta KB WOP, ref. no. 1629, vol. 49, Notatka służbowa szefa wydziału łączności i r./lok KB WOP w sprawie łączności dowodzenia i współdziałania w rejonie Zatoki Gdańskiej z 1967 r., pp. 1–2.

⁴³ This is what the long-serving deputy commander for line affairs of KBWOP in Gdansk, Col. Dipl. J. Nikiforow, wrote about the ‘new straight’ years later: “[...] According to the order of the head of WOP, we had to change the system of protecting the Bay of Gdańsk. From now on, it was to be protected according to the actual course of the border, including the border of internal waters. So it was the Hel promontory and the junction of the border with the USSR on the Vistula Spit. The Maritime Border Ship Brigade had a greater share in this, because due to the condition of the sea in this section, it had to be guarded by OP-type ships, not as before, where this task was performed, as a rule, by KP-type ships. On our part, appropriate undertakings should have been made to install a new radar apparatus (RN) on POWT Krynica Morska and to include this POWT in the radio network in the relation: POWT-Gdynia-Gdansk-Hel-circles. It was also necessary to prepare the crew of this POWT for the new task, and to equip them with new documents (maps). The duty service and the watchtower command also had to be prepared. As time went on, the system worked smoothly [...]”. J. Nikiforow, *W granicznym kalejdoskopie – wspomnienia 1945–2005*, Wydawnictwo DJ Drukarnia, Gdańsk 2007, p. 63.

staff of POWT WOP Jantar in the field of observation and notification were fulfilled by the staff of POWT WOP Łysica.⁴⁴

In addition, the following conclusions emerged on the issue of connectivity.

Firstly, in the radio network (UKF on FM) No. 7 of command and cooperation, audibility between the duty officer (ODO) of KB WOP (Gdańsk-Nowy Port) and other radios was good, with the exception of poor audibility between POWT WOP Łysica and POWT Gdynia (WOP port battalion Gdynia, 1 Czechosłowacka St.), where there was poor audibility due to the inability to raise the antenna. Poor audibility also occurred between POWT WOP Łysica and DOP in Gdańsk Westerplatte, which was also due to a low antenna. In addition, it was not considered advisable for POWT WOP Jantar to operate in this network. On the other hand, if the vessels of t. KP were on the 'new straight', it was necessary to maintain communication with them as before, i.e. every 15 minutes, or for MBOP to adapt power sources for them, enabling the radios installed on t. KP vessels to be kept on constant listening watch.

Secondly, in radio networks (UKF – on radio stations t. R-609 and t. RSK) No. 8 and 9 serving to maintain command communication and cooperation with aircraft and ships in service – after the transfer of radio station t. R-609 from POWT WOP Jantar to POWT WOP Łysica, it was assumed that POWT WOP Łysica would not have direct radio communication with ODO KB WOP, DOP (Gdańsk-Westerplatte), Klucz Lotnictwa SELR WOP (in Gdańsk-Wrzeszcz) or POWT WOP Hel. This was attributed to the increased distance and low sensitivity of the receivers of this apparatus (10 microvolts). Therefore, it was estimated that the role of the R-609 radio station would come down only to maintaining communication between WOP POWT and WOP aircraft and ships, which would be located in the vicinity of Krynica Morska.

Thirdly, the KF radio network no. 4 of the Kashubian BWOP headquarters command was considered completely superfluous, as the command of aircraft with KF radio stations should be carried out through the connection of the R-118 radio station of the Kashubian BWOP headquarters and aircraft radio stations to the KF radio network no. 5 (command network of the 31st DOP in Gdańsk Westerplatte). In this way, it was intended to simultaneously resolve issues of interoperability between ships and aircraft on short wave (KF).

⁴⁴ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta KB WOP, ref. no. 1629, vol. 49, Notatka służbowa szefa wydziału łączności i r./lok KB WOP..., op. cit., p. 1.

Also, it was considered superfluous to maintain the currently still existing co-operation network of the coastal BWOPs, as this co-operation should be done by incorporating the KF radio stations of the respective coastal BWOPs (Pomorska BWOP – Szczecin, Bałtycka BWOP – Koszalin and Kaszubska BWOP – Gdańsk) into the command network of MBOP, which, as agreed, was responsible for conducting border operations at sea.

In addition, it was requested that, for the purpose of securing communications, the O&IOT of the WOP headquarters in Warsaw should consider and cause:

- allotment to KB WOP of three new VHF marine radios, instead of the existing two R-609 and one RSK, which had already lost their operating power and thus required constant repairs, as well as the issue of their overhaul in MW – directly or through MBOP;
- assigning directly from MW or by MBOP an appropriate number of sets of quartzes to the above-mentioned equipment in order to ensure communication with aircraft on variable frequencies (for the year 1967 five sets were missing for two R-609 t. radios).⁴⁵

On the other hand, in the late 1960s, according to the ‘Instruction on the interaction of the MW with the WOP⁴⁶ On the Coast,’ the following organisation of radio and wire communication between the headquarters and units of the MW and WOP was introduced.

- At the level of MW headquarters (mp. Gdynia) – the staff of the Maritime Border Ship Brigade (MBOP – mp. Gdańsk Nowy Port, ul. Oliwska 35) and the staff of the 16th Kashubian BWOP (mp. Gdańsk Nowy Port, ul. Oliwska 35):
 - radio communication
 - on KP radio network No. 743 – interaction between MW and BWOP,
 - wire communication
 - WCz telephone communication in the MSW system,
 - telephonic unclassified,

⁴⁵ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta KB WOP, ref. no. 1629, vol. 49, Notatka służbowa szefa wydziału łączności i r./lok KB WOP w sprawie łączności dowodzenia i współdziałania..., op. cit., p. 2.

⁴⁶ ASG w Szczecinie, Akta DWOP, ref. no. 2373, vol. 4, Instrukcja o współdziałaniu MW z WOP opracowana przez st. pom. Szefa Oddziału Operacyjno-Szkoleniowego ds. morskich kmdr. por. M. Andrzejuka, Gdynia–Warszawa 1969, Annex no. 1, pp. 1–3 and Annex no. 4.

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- telephony unclassified by Garnizonowy Węzeł Łączności (GWŁ) Gdańsk.
 - At the level of the MW-staff of the 12th Pomeranian BWOP (mp. Szczecin) and the 15th Baltic BWOP (mp. Koszalin):
 - radio communication
 - on KF radio network No. 743 – interaction between MW and BWOP,
 - wire communication
 - WCz telephone communication in the MSW system,
 - telephone communication unclassified from 12th Pomeranian BWOP (Szczecin) via Communications Node (WŁ) of 8th Flotilla of Coastal Defence (FOW), from 15th Baltic BWOP (Koszalin) via GWŁ Ustka and GWŁ Koszalin,
 - telegraphic unclassified in the GWŁ WP system.
 - At the staff level of the 12th Pomeranian BWOP – staff of the 8th Coastal Defence Flotilla (FOW):
 - wired communication
 - non-secret telephone communication by GWŁ Szczecin,
 - unclassified telegraphic communication by GWŁ Szczecin.
 - At the level of the HQ 15 Baltic BWOP – HQ 8 FOW:
 - wired communication
 - unclassified telephone communication by WŁ Komenda Portu Wojennego (KPW) Kołobrzeg,
 - unclassified telegraphic communication by GWŁ WP system.
 - At the level of the staff of the 15th Baltic BWOP – staff of the 9th FOW:
 - wired communication
 - unclassified telephone by GWŁ Koszalin from GWŁ Ustka and WŁ Dowództwa MW (DMW – mp. Gdynia),
 - unclassified telegraphic communication by GWŁ WP system.
 - At the level of staff of 16th Kashubian BWOP – staff of 9th FOW:
 - wired communication
 - unclassified direct telephone communication through WŁ Dowództwa MW (DMW – mp. Gdynia),
 - unconcealed telegraphic communication by GWŁ Gdańsk and WŁ DMW (Gdynia).
 - At HQ level of the 8th FOW – Pomeranian DOP (PDOP – mp. Świnoujście):
 - radio communication
 - in KF radio network no. 727 according to MW radio data

- wire communication
 - unclassified direct telephone communication.
- At the staff level of the 8th FOW – Baltic DOP (mp. Kołobrzeg):
 - radio communication
 - in KF radio network no. 727 according to MW radio data
 - wire communication
 - unconcealed telephone communication by WŁ KPW Kołobrzeg,
 - undisclosed telegraphic communication by WŁ KPW Kołobrzeg.
- At the staff level of the 9th FOW – Kashubian DOP (mp. Gdansk-Westerplatte):
 - radio communication
 - in KF radio network no. 737 according to MW radio data
 - wire communication
 - unclassified telephone communication by WŁ DMW and WŁ 16. BWOP.
- Between vessels of the MW, MBOP, Visual and Technical Observation and Communication Posts (POWTi³) of the MW and aircraft:
 - radio communications
 - between ships on duty in KF radio networks No. 727 and 737 and in cases of unplanned interaction with ships at sea in KF radio network No. 708,
 - between WOP, MW and POWTi³ MW ships on VHF radio network No. 750 – call channel I; in radio network No. 758U – for work of ships with POWTi³ (channel III for POWTi³, channel II for WOP ships) and for work of ships among themselves; in radio network No. 759 U for interaction with aircraft.
- At the level of WOP watchtowers, POWTi³ MW and POWT WOP:
 - wired communication
 - unclassified telephone communication on WOP and MW lines in relations in accordance with the appendix (No. 4 – Organisation of wire communication of cooperation between WOP and MW units.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Ibidem, p. 3.

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Summary

In the article, the author conducted an analysis of the mode of operation of the communications system used by the Border Protection Forces in the protection of the Polish maritime border in the second half of the 20th century. Particular attention was paid to selected types of communications equipment used by soldiers of the formation's coastal brigades.

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**INTERMINGLING MILITARY AND NON-MILITARY
CONFLICTS AT THE TURN OF THE 20TH AND 21ST
CENTURIES. SELECTED ASPECTS**

**WZAJEMNE PRZENIKANIE SIĘ KONFLIKTÓW
MILITARNYCH I POZAMILITARNYCH NA PRZEŁOMIE XX
I XXI WIEKU. WYBRANE ASPEKTY**

Abstract: Conflicts are part of the human condition and are present both in the military and non-military spheres. Under the influence of changes in civilization, including the scientific and technological revolution and modern technologies, there are changes that affect the international community. Progress is particularly evident in information and communication technology, which is present in all areas of human life. The ongoing transformation and the aforementioned revolution is also present in the armed forces, whose components take an active part not only in humanitarian missions abroad but also, in accordance with their function, participate in internal and interstate armed conflicts. The ongoing processes in the global security space have a significant impact on the nature of the actions carried out and the adaptation of modern techniques and technologies, which is evident in the armed conflicts of the 21st century. In addition to the theatres on land, at sea, in the deep sea, in the air and in space, another theatre has emerged – cyberspace and the human mind. Accompanying these is global information warfare, with information operations playing service roles. Winning in these theatres provides advantages of particular interest. The material is supported by observation of ongoing

military and non-military conflicts, analysis of selected literature on the subject, as well as on-going phenomena, events and processes in the current global security space.

Zarys treści: Konflikty zawsze towarzyszą człowiekowi. Są obecne zarówno w sferze militarnej, jak i pozamilitarnej. Pod wpływem przemian cywilizacyjnych, w tym rewolucji naukowo-technicznej i nowoczesnych technologii, następują zmiany, które dotyczą społeczność międzynarodową. Postęp, który jest obecny we wszystkich dziedzinach życia człowieka, jest szczególnie widoczny w technikach teleinformatycznych i komunikacyjnych. Trwająca przemiana i wspomniana rewolucja są również obecne w siłach zbrojnych, których komponenty nie tylko biorą aktywny udział w misjach humanitarnych poza granicami kraju, ale również, zgodnie z ich funkcją, uczestniczą w wewnętrznych i międzypaństwowych konfliktach zbrojnych. Procesy zachodzące w globalnej przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa mają znaczący wpływ na charakter prowadzonych działań, adaptowanie nowoczesnych technik i technologii, co jest widoczne w konfliktach zbrojnych XXI wieku. Obok teatrów działań wojennych w przestrzeniach: lądowej, morskiej, głębin morskich, powietrznej, kosmicznej, pojawiły się kolejne teatry działań: cyberprzestrzeń i umysł ludzki. Związana z nimi jest globalna wojna informacyjna, w ramach której prowadzone są operacje informacyjne pełniące role usługowe. Ich wygranie to przewaga w sferach zainteresowania. W materiale posiłkowano się obserwacją trwających konfliktów w sferach militarnej i pozamilitarnej, analizą wybranej literatury przedmiotu, a także zachodzących zjawisk, zdarzeń i procesów w obecnej przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa globalnego.

Keywords: war, armed conflict, theatre of warfare, cyberspace, information warfare.

Słowa kluczowe: wojna, konflikt zbrojny, teatr działań wojennych, cyberprzestrzeń, wojna informacyjna.

Characteristics of the problem

“Man and societies strive to expand their possession and power, driven by the motive of survival and expansion. The struggle for the existence of man, enterprise and the state forces not only to strive for their own existence, but in fear of collapse, causes expansion, which results from the nature of man, from his psyche, which produces the need for success, fame, wealth, power, distinction.

The system of the social system, based on competition and private wealth, forces the expansion of capital, which must show aggressive expansion in order to last.”¹

It is worth bearing in mind that “from time immemorial, contradictions and struggle have been the fundamental law of nature, life and human existence, and the source of all change and progress. The principle applies here that every decision, even the most positive one, consists of giving to someone and taking away from someone else. Therein lies the essence (source) of the contradiction of interests (aspirations, hierarchy of values). One can, of course, relate this to the macro scale, when, for example, one state seeks to satisfy its needs at the expense of another.”²

This characteristic phenomenon, inherent not only to humans but also to biota, is accompanied by a constant struggle for survival in its environment and, above all, for domination. We are witnesses and sometimes direct participants in military and/or non-military conflicts, which have diverse backgrounds and causes and, in the absence of rational decisions and behaviour (of political elites, including leaders, as well as of nations, societies) in relation to the existing threats (external and internal) to the security of the state(s), lead to a crisis situation which, in extreme cases, may escalate into armed conflict.

“In the modern world, wars have not ceased to be a tool of international politics despite the existence of international organisations carrying out vigorous activities aimed at disarmament and the complete elimination of war as a means of conflict resolution. The development of weapons of mass destruction and their new derivatives (without radiation), which are in a sense the pinnacle of scientific, technical and technological thought, has at the same time become a denial of the possibility of using them to achieve any goal.”³

What is particularly noteworthy is that no political objective can justify the use of nuclear weapons and their successive derivatives, due to the fact that there are and can be no winners in a nuclear war.

The above spaces, as well as the security spaces of individual states at the beginning of the 21st century, are dominated by information warfare, with information operations aimed not only at securing the information needs of its participants, but at taking control of the opponent’s information resources, up

¹ Z. Narski, *O dyktaturze kapitału globalnego*, Wydawnictwo SUSPENS, Toruń 2004, p. 5.

² S. Dworecki, *Od konfliktu do wojny*, Wydawnictwo BUWIK, Warszawa 1996, p. 102.

³ A. Żebrowski, *Przywileje i immunitety dyplomatyczne i konsularne podczas konfliktu zbrojnego*, Wydawnictwo Profesjonalnej Szkoły Biznesu, Kraków 1999, p. 21.

to and including physical destruction. "ICT and communications are widely used in negative and positive cooperation, supported by information warfare (war), treated as negative mutual cooperation, at least subjectively, implemented in the spheres of information acquisition, information disruption and information defence, where every action of one side is subordinated to the antagonistic action of the other side."⁴

Information warfare in the 21st century takes the form of information warfare on a global scale. "Information warfare always accompanies human action, plays the role of supporting combat and is thus present in the spheres: political, ideological, economic, military, cultural, military conflicts with diverse backgrounds, in the fight for legally protected secrets, in the fight against terrorism, internationally organised crime, etc."⁵

It is worth bearing in mind that "in-depth reflection on the problems of the future makes it possible to forecast the role of force in general and of military force in resolving the contradictions and conflicts that arise and will arise in many spheres and fields. On this basis, a list of selected features of armed struggle, war and military action can be drawn up:

1. the threat of war remains real, hence military power will not lose its *raison d'être*,
2. the likelihood of small-scale conflicts will remain low, while the number of local, limited conflicts will increase,
3. the basis of conflicts will increasingly be economic (raw materials, markets, technology, profits) and ethnic and religious problems,
4. the number of different forms and means of warfare will increase rapidly,
5. there will be extreme oppositions, asymmetry of forms and means, tools, principles and modes of action,
6. warfare and other actions will, as a rule, be combined actions in the national-international, civil-military, combat-non-combat and within the framework of types of action,
7. armed combat will less often be a planned policy measure, more often an escalation effect in situations of ineffective non-military measures,
8. the level of technological development and economic affluence of the parties will be the primary determinant of conflict characteristics,

⁴ L. Ciborowski, *Walka informacyjna*, Toruń 1999, p. 187.

⁵ A. Żebrowski, *Walka informacyjna w asymetrycznym środowisku bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego, Kraków 2016, p. 8.

9. military activities other than war will become the primary area of activity of the armed forces.”⁶

“There are around 200 states and several times that number of ethnic, national, tribal and religious groups in the world. States and groups have their own interests and goals. These can be either common or divergent. If a group or entities have common interests and goals, there is often cooperation between them. If, on the other hand, there are divergent interests and goals, conflict can occur.”⁷ Disagreements sometimes exist, i.e. issues on which no agreement has been reached, meaning that the parties are unable or unwilling to reconcile peacefully.

It is also worth bearing in mind that in the evolving global security environment the processes accompanying aggressive globalisation affect practically all spheres of state (states) activity, which also makes its presence felt in the sphere of state (states) security and defence. After the collapse of the bipolar division of the world and the Soviet Union, as well as many other significant decisions, there has been a change in the approach to security, which takes on a special dimension in the 21st century. Alongside non-military conflicts in this new global reality, military conflicts continue to pose the greatest threat to humans and their environment.

“Political and military changes in Europe (and the world) and the rapid development of the means of armed struggle present security science with entirely new challenges. (...) Ways of waging war and forms of warfare are changing with the progress of civilisation, science and technology. With the interdependencies that exist between a society, its economy and its military, every socio-economic change leads to transformations in the ways of warfare.”⁸ This applies to positive competition and, above all, to negative confrontation.

Despite the collapse of the aforementioned bipolar division of the world, people and the world cannot be expected to change, and wars and conflicts in the military and non-military spheres thus cannot be avoided. The balance of power and international politics at the time did not solve many important problems, including those of nationality, ethnicity or religion. New threats are superimposed on existing ones, which pose serious challenges to the international

⁶ C. Rutkowski, *Problemy bezpieczeństwa i sił zbrojnych XXI wieku*, “Myśl Wojskowa” 2001, no. 2, pp. 19–20.

⁷ *Konflikty zbrojne we współczesnym świecie*, Zintegrowana Platforma Edukacyjna, <https://zpe.gov.pl/a/konflikty-we-wspolczesnym-swiecie/DtXFbF0BZ> (accessed 12.01.2023).

⁸ M. Wiatr, *Między strategią a taktyką*, Wydawnictwo Adam Marszałek, Toruń 1999, p. 7.

community. Some are internationalised, some are ignored and other flashpoints are eliminated and not allowed to reactivate.

This poses a major challenge for states and organisations competent in the sphere of strengthening international security and peace. Other participants also deserve attention: “the participants in the new wars are incommensurable, fundamentally different, incomparable organisations: paramilitaries, self-defence groups, armies and armies of local chiefs, criminal gangs, police (militia) units, mercenary groups and demoralised units (remnants) of regular troops. From an organisational point of view they are highly decentralised or even dispersed. They only appear in a coordinated manner in certain situations from confrontation to confrontation.”⁹ The designated participants very often engage in guerrilla warfare, which is a specific form of armed struggle that expresses itself in surprising, brief and violent armed clashes, ambushes, assaults, acts of diversion and sabotage combined with psychological impact.¹⁰ Very often, children are involved in armed conflict, which is particularly the case in Central and South American countries, Africa and Southeast Asia.

We are also witnessing the development of nationalism, chauvinism, religious fundamentalism, international terrorism, anarchist religious and mafia organisations. The processes associated with globalisation are accompanied by epidemics, pandemics, famine, lack of and/or limited access to safe drinking water supplies, religious and national conflicts, most often accompanied by genocide, ethnic cleansing, the emptying of territories, shelling, destruction of infrastructure and laying of landmines, etc.

The contemporary international security environment is complex, turbulent and unpredictable, where the causes of military (and non-military) threats are to be found in tensions and conflicts of interest in the area of socio-political, financial-economic, national-ethnic, religious-cultural and even environmental and military relations. Such a position is supported by the multifaceted and multifaceted intertwining of conditions occurring in the internal and external (near and far) environment, which is evident in, among other things:

1. the increasing anarchisation of socio-political life on a global scale, including in states possessing or seeking to acquire nuclear weapons,
2. ongoing armed conflicts between states,
3. ongoing internal armed conflicts,

⁹ B. Balcerowicz, *Sily zbrojne w stanie pokoju, kryzysu, wojny*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2010, p. 162.

¹⁰ M. Laprus (ed.), *Leksykon wiedzy wojskowej*, MON, Warszawa 1979, p. 103.

4. the unstable situation in the global security area, where economic difficulties, socio-political contradictions, trends towards the development of military capabilities, or divergent aspirations are apparent in many states,
5. the arms race (including new generations of weapons with increased destructive power without, inter alia, a radioactive effect),
6. the revolution in information and communication technologies,
7. the great-power aspirations of China and Russia, and the nuclear-weapon states (China, France, Russia, the United States, the United Kingdom, India, Pakistan, Israel, North Korea),
8. power aspirations of Germany, Japan, Israel, Turkey,
9. criticism and denial of existing treaty arrangements and the exposure of historical pasts,
10. the widening circle of states possessing nuclear weapons and seeking to acquire them (e.g. Iran),
11. the lack of international control over nuclear weapons proliferation, the means of their production and their means of delivery (ballistic missiles),
12. ongoing wars: economic, psychological, religious, cultural, information,
13. cyberspace, generating threats to the security of the international environment and individual states,
14. ongoing global information warfare,
15. mass movement of people on a global scale.

It should be borne in mind that the above phenomena cannot be ignored by participants in international relations, treating them as a source of direct and/or indirect threats, including armed conflict.

Particularly noteworthy is the aforementioned loss of the state's exclusivity in the disposition of violence, as represented by the armed forces. In addition, states are no longer a monopoly on services of an intelligence and counter-intelligence nature, thus losing their previous ability to control society. This also applies to the sphere of security and public order involving private (including non-state) actors.

The processes that accompany the aforementioned globalisation affect not only the economic sphere, where it is particularly visible, but also other areas of state and private sector influence. From the point of view of the reflections carried out, the gradual loss by states of their competences in favour of international actors deserves attention. "The state is privatising its enterprises and withdrawing from economic activity. Privatisation, moreover, concerns not only the

economic sphere, science, education, health, schooling, railways and transport, but is also beginning to encompass areas traditionally considered to be core tasks of the state, such as the provision of internal security (e.g. personal and property security entities, private security patrols¹¹ – author’s note), the functioning of the penitentiary system, and the defence system (e.g. defence industry, privatisation of military services, private services of an intelligence and counter-intelligence nature – author’s note).¹²

The early 1990s saw conjunctural political decisions that led, among other things, to reductions in defence budgets, which translated into reductions in armed forces in many countries. “This led (...) to a kind of military stalemate. This meant that no state in the world (with the exception of the United States) could afford to intervene militarily against anyone with impunity (e.g. Iraq or Afghanistan). The resulting situation provided security comfort on the one hand, but on the other hand is a source of various regional conflicts triggered by all manner of authoritarian caciques and leaders, fundamentalists, nationalists and other irresponsible claimant movements.”¹³ These decisions have influenced the development of the armed forces of many states, whose level of training and equipment does not always allow them to perform tasks on a modern battlefield in the event of the outbreak of a traditional armed conflict. The conflict in Ukraine (or the Middle East) has demonstrated the military weakness of many European states, including NATO (European Union) member states, which is exploited in the information war not only by the direct participants, but also by third parties.

Reducing the armed forces in each country creates an army of unemployed trained professionals who, faced with unemployment, have found employment in private companies offering a wide range of military services. Many of them have fed into organised crime structures.

Services of this nature are used by both state institutions (e.g. Department of Defence, US State Department, UN) and private economic sector actors. The range of services, the specialised training and the ability to use sometimes

¹¹ This concerns the Generation Identitaire (GI) organisation founded in France. It is a youth organisation that aims to protect local, national and European identity. Its members learn self-defence and are encouraged to maintain physical fitness. GI members organise security patrols.

¹² E. Halizak, R. Kuźniar, J. Symonides (eds.), *Globalizacja a stosunki międzynarodowe*, Oficyna Wydawnicza Branta, Bydgoszcz–Warszawa 2004, p. 132.

¹³ J. Gołębiowski, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe RP*, “Zeszyt Naukowy Towarzystwa Wiedzy Obronnej” 1999, no. 1, p. 10.

state-of-the-art weapons has an impact on the so-called privatisation of armed conflict. Companies of this nature are driven primarily by profit rather than politics or ideology.

We have entered a new world, a world in which the state's de facto monopoly on the means of violence is passing away.¹⁴ "The violence hitherto monopolised by the state is partly passing into the hands of paramilitary (non-state) groups, private security agencies, security organisations, etc. There are many international and multinational corporations offering security services to states and non-states in the international market."¹⁵ The privatisation of military and paramilitary activities is based on the theory that security can be treated as a service and that private corporations are more efficient than state-owned ones.¹⁶

Globalisation and the accompanying threats, including new ones, have an impact on the need to address them in security policy, which has been evolving since the collapse of the bipolar division of the world along with its consequences. "The dominance of internal conflicts claimed some 3.6 million lives in the 1990s, while some 220,000 people were killed in interstate conflicts. This demonstrates the increase in internal insecurity due to numerous conflicts resulting from, among other things, lack of development, poverty, cultural and religious differences, questioning of minority rights and the rights of peoples to self-determination."¹⁷

The conflicts of the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries are different, most often punctuated by high-intensity conflicts where the warring parties use diverse means of destruction. The scale and dynamics of these conflicts, due to the parties involved and their consequences, require new approaches to conflict resolution.

Under these complex conditions, the traditional function not only of the armed forces but also of the intelligence and counter-intelligence services is evolving. In the case of the armed forces, their traditional role and mission of defending the state against external attacks, protecting borders, maintaining internal stability

¹⁴ H. Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics*, Macmillan, London 1977, p. 15; cited in: B. Balcerowicz, *Sily zbrojne w stanie pokoju, kryzysu, wojny*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2010, p. 164.

¹⁵ B. Balcerowicz, *Sily zbrojne...*, op. cit., p. 164.

¹⁶ K. R. Nossal, *Roland goes corporate: Mercenaries and transnational security corporations in the post-cold war era*, "Civil Wars" 1998, vol. 1, iss. 1; cited in: B. Balcerowicz, *Sily zbrojne w stanie pokoju, kryzysu, wojny*, Warszawa 2010, p. 164.

¹⁷ E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, J. Symonides (eds.), *Globalizacja...*, op. cit., p. 135.

and restoring constitutional order when necessary has been re-evaluated. In this new situation, with the exception of a few countries, they are becoming a relatively less used instrument of pressure and foreign policy.¹⁸ Very often their role is reduced to an internal function, where the main emphasis is on the fight against international terrorism, organised crime structures, participation in the crisis management process or the implementation of foreign humanitarian missions.

Intelligence and counter-intelligence activities have also been privatised, which means that the state(s) is not the only entity using subordinate agencies of this nature. Tasks of this nature are carried out by specialised intelligence/counter-intelligence cells of large industrial and commercial corporations, consulting companies, business intelligence, the aforementioned private companies offering military services, as well as terrorist organisations, organised crime groups and nationalist groups, etc. The loss by states of their monopoly on such an important sphere of internal and external security means the loss of their monopoly on the control of society. Thus, states take many measures of a legal and institutional nature to secure their own information needs for the control of society (internal and external adversary).

To this end, they take advantage of existing threats to the security of citizens, e.g. from terrorist organisations, where propaganda, disinformation and manipulation of perception are key to legitimate surveillance of society in a state under the rule of law. These actors support their activities with tools of the scientific and technological revolution, e.g. the Pegasus and Cellebrite spy systems.¹⁹ For example, “tools from Israeli company Cellebrite, when connected to a phone, can, among other things, read user data stored in the cloud from more than 50 sources, including Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, Google Drive and WhatsApp. The technology can crack the security of phones and seize user data from them.”²⁰ It is noteworthy that Cellebrite, like Pegasus manufacturer NSO Group, sold its technology under an export licence from the Israeli Ministry of Defence. Obtaining information about people of interest (e.g. individuals with access to classified state security

¹⁸ J. Symonides, *The New Role of the Army in Peacebuilding*, in: *From Partial Insecurity to Global Security*, UNESCO, Paris 1997, pp. 103–115, cited in: E. Haliżak, R. Kuźniar, J. Symonides (eds.), *Globalizacja...*, op. cit., p. 136.

¹⁹ Once connected to a phone, they can, among other things, read user data stored in the cloud from more than 50 sources, including Facebook, Twitter, Gmail, Google Drive and WhatsApp (P. Szostek, *Policja znowu kupuje izraelską technologię szpiegowską Cellebrite*, tvn24.pl, <https://tvn24.pl/polska/policja-znowu-kupuje-cellebrite-czym-jest-ta-izraelska-technologie-szpiegowska-st6624777>, accessed 03.03.2025).

²⁰ Ibidem.

information) by a foreign intelligence service not only violates the existing system of protection of classified information, but also allows for a hoodoo probe and the recruitment of a cooperative agent. In the ongoing war on the classified front, such operations are carried out by intelligence elements of both the adversary and the targeted state.

Information operations conducted by organised cross-border criminal groups, terrorist organisations or private companies offering security services should also be borne in mind.

Armed conflicts at the dawn of the 21st century are conflicts with diverse rationales and causes, as well as the power of destructive impact, where the development of computer, communication networks and the Internet, as well as emerging spontaneous forms of warfare in these networks, precision-guided weapons and weapons with nuclear weapon effects (e.g. electromagnetic weapons) are changing the modern battlefield. All the more so because “the boundaries between soldiers and non-soldiers have now been blurred and the divide between combat and non-combat has almost disappeared, also globalisation has made all problems interdependent and interconnected, so the key to confront these phenomena must be found, a key that should open all the locks that close the door to war. Moreover, this key should fit all levels and dimensions of war from politics to strategy and operational techniques to tactics. It should also be useful for politicians and generals as well as ordinary soldiers. It is hard to imagine a more appropriate key than unrestricted warfare.”²¹

This soldier and non-soldier will most likely be (or perhaps already is) a hacker (an army of hackers) who, using their specialised knowledge, access to cyberspace and ICT equipment (including specialised equipment), will be able to achieve strategic political, economic, military, cultural or social objectives without the use of armed forces and military might leading to physical destruction. “After all, forms that are not characterised by the use of armed forces and military might, and are not even associated with the occurrence of bloodshed and casualties, are just as likely to guarantee the successful achievement of the objectives of war, and even to achieve greater benefits than when military might is used.”²²

²¹ Q. Liang, W. Xiangsu, *Unrestricted Warfare: Assumptions on War and Tactics in the Age of Globalization*, Beijing 1999; cited in: R. Szpyra, *Militarne operacje informacyjne*, AON, Warszawa 2003, p. 9.

²² *Ibidem*.

Armed conflicts that have taken place after the breakdown of the bipolar division of the world and that are part of the transformation of civilisation are diverse forms of warfare conducted by regular armed forces as well as many non-state actors. These actors already have at their disposal a powerful arsenal that allows them not only to create permanent fear, but also to lead to the realisation of accepted goals without the use of armed violence.

Imagination is paramount in these actions, which, combined with modern technologies, pose a serious challenge, where the material consequences are sometimes difficult to predict and, in the absence of rational assessment by politicians or specialists, can lead to serious consequences for the security of not only the individual, but also the nation or the state. It can also threaten the security of the international environment. Imaginative thinking can lead to the thesis that anything can be used to neutralise an adversary, not necessarily physically. Creative thinking includes the emergence of a new paradigm to describe this thesis, indicated below:

ANYTHING THAT GOES BEYOND THE MILITARY SPHERE SHOULD BE REGARDED AS A WEAPON. HOWEVER, ANYTHING THAT CAN BE USED IN MILITARY OPERATIONSTHAT CAN BENEFIT MAN CAN ALSO HARM HIM, BEING IN EFFECT A WEAPON.

Concept, nature and types of conflict

Armed conflicts are characterised by the pursuit by one of the parties to a negative co-option “to achieve its objective by harming the basis of existence (constraints) of the other party – in territorial, political, economic or military terms. (...) Depending on their objectives or grounds, armed conflicts can be divided into: partition, liberation, ethnicity, nationality, religion, culture, etc.”²³ Every conflict, including armed conflicts, has diverse substrates which makes their peaceful resolution very difficult because the parties to the conflict are always guided by vested interests that are not always acceptable to the opposing side, as well as the international environment.

²³ Ibidem, p. 105.

Table 1. Concepts of armed conflict

Source	Notions of armed conflict
L. Mucha, <i>Przemoc zbrojna</i> , Warszawa 1991, p. 33	Armed conflict is the action of armed forces of opposing states (nations, social classes) conducted on a limited (in terms of purpose, means used, area, duration) scale
<i>International Military and Defense Encyclopedia by Trevor N. Dupuy</i> , vol. 6, Washington 1993, p. 2886	Armed conflict is an ambiguous term about which there is no consensus in science. Among the different types of war, one mentions reduced-intensity conflict, defining it as: armed action on the ground between peace and open war using strictly limited forces and methods
B. Balcerowicz (ed.), <i>Słownik podstawowych terminów dotyczących bezpieczeństwa państwa</i> , Warszawa 1994, p. 12	Armed conflict is a type of armed violence involving the pursuit of state (coalition, social group) objectives through mutual action using armed forces or organised and armed groups. By applying the criteria of the uses of armed conflict, it is possible to distinguish between wars and border armed conflicts
S. Dworecki, <i>Współczesne konflikty zbrojne. Studium wybranych problemów</i> , Warszawa 1994, p. 40	Armed conflict is a form of struggle, or more precisely of armed action, which occurs when the (formalised) parties, defending their interests (the country), use coercion in an institutionalised form – in the sense of international law
The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia ruled on 2 October 1995 that	An armed conflict exists whenever there is armed force or prolonged armed violence between government authorities and organised armed groups or between such groups within the territory of a single state
S. Dworecki, <i>Od konfliktu do wojny</i> , Warszawa 1996, p. 105	Armed conflict is a form of combat (armed action) and occurs when the (formalised) parties, defending their interests (reasons), use coercion (physical violence) in an institutionalised form – in the sense of international law
B. Balcerowicz, <i>Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego</i> , Warszawa 2002, p. 59	Armed conflict, is a contradiction, a dispute (...) resolved with the use of armed forces (armed groups) using armed violence

Source	Notions of armed conflict
B. Barnaszewski, <i>Współczesny konflikt zbrojny – państwo ubezwłasnowolnione</i> , “Zeszyty Naukowe WSOWL” 2008, no. 3, p. 72	Armed conflict is any manifestation of armed belligerence – including unspoken, also involving participants who are not subjects of international law. Armed conflict is preceded by antagonism, a growing clash of interests, a verbal clash and conflict action
W. Łepkowski (ed.), <i>Słownik terminów z zakresu bezpieczeństwa narodowego</i> , Warszawa 2009, p. 59	Armed conflict, is a contradiction arising between states (coalitions of states) resolved by the use of armed force, using armed violence. From the point of view of the forms and methods of armed violence used, armed conflicts include war, armed intervention, armed incident, military coup, armed blockade, demonstration of force and others
<i>Konflikty zbrojne we współczesnym świecie</i> , Zintegrowana Platforma Edukacyjna, https://zpe.gov.pl/a/konflikty-zbrojne-we-wspolczesnym-swiecie/DtXFbf0BZ (accessed 11.01.2023)	Armed conflict is a situation in which armed force has been used between the parties. This means that conflicts include any manifestation of armed struggle. An international dispute, in which confrontation between parties is carried out by methods other than armed struggle, such as by economic, diplomatic, informational means, should be distinguished from armed conflict

Source: compiled from available literature.

Bearing in mind the complex rationale and causes of armed conflicts, their participants (state and/or non-state), the means of warfare used (including the latest generation of weapons, sometimes with effects accompanying the explosion of a nuclear bomb, such as an electromagnetic pulse), it is necessary to point out the objectives of armed action, which have always been and are present among policy makers making decisions on the use of armed forces in the external as well as internal environment of the state.

Table 2. Targets of military action

Objectives of military operations	
seizure of power	seize territory
revindication of territory	ensuring territorial unity
secession of regions	repelling military aggression

Objectives of military operations	
territorial annexation	defence of sovereignty
restrictions on civil liberties	defence of territorial cohesion
defence of national minorities	taking control of natural resources (including energy resources)
seizure of control of strategic points in selected geographic regions	humanitarian missions
global information dominance, taking control of energy resources (oil, natural gas), safe water resources on a global scale	

Source: S. Dworecki, *Od konfliktu do wojny*, AON, Warszawa 1996, p. 106.

Armed conflicts can also be divided according to: spatial extent; participating parties; means of warfare used (conventional, unconventional); mode of armed action (regular, irregular, dispersed, guerrilla); intensity of action (low, medium, high intensity) or other criteria. It is important to consider whether the above division will be appropriate for the conduct of conflicts in cyberspace, space, as well as in the battle for the minds of individuals, social groups, professional groups, nations and the international community.

Table 3. Armed conflicts

Armed conflicts	
Division of armed conflicts by range (area)	
local armed conflict	border armed conflict
continental armed conflict	regional armed conflict
global armed conflict	
Division of armed conflicts by the form of achievement of objectives	
internal armed conflict	interstate armed conflict
civil war	international armed conflict
military coup	armed assault
armed incident	armed retaliation
armed intervention	

Source: S. Dworecki, *Od konfliktu do wojny*, AON, Warszawa 1996, p. 107.

The changing environment of conflicts

Changes are taking place in the international security environment, where the breakdown of the bipolar division of the world and its aftermath, justify the need

to change the approach and evaluation of previous views on armed conflicts of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. First of all, such mundane phenomena as the free movement of people, capital, services, information, knowledge and ideas have fundamentally changed the approach to threats, their scale and dynamics, and require a new perspective on the accompanying conflicts (including armed conflicts). The ongoing revolution in ICT and communication techniques, the Internet and modern technologies that dominate our daily lives should be kept in mind.

The emergence of the fifth dimension of confrontation, cyberspace, is changing the approach to the conduct of armed (non-armed) conflicts, where the realization of strategic objectives related to expansion into the territory of the state – the opponent – does not necessarily involve the introduction of armed forces. Conflicts will be conducted in cyberspace, where information/an information attack will target the critical infrastructure of the state of interest, which depends on the mentioned ICT and communication techniques. In these conflicts, there are no political or administrative borders, no need for passports and the offensive side can always be anonymous.

Cyberspace, ICT and communication techniques are permanently part of the development of the armed forces, where the saturation of command, communications and automation systems, reconnaissance and weapons management determine the effectiveness of the performance of tasks at all levels of the armed forces in the system of state security and defence.

The existing and emerging new threats, and the conflicts erupting against them (among other armed conflicts) require a qualitatively new look at: the rationale and causes, the course, the parties involved, the means of warfare used, the tactics of action, the sponsors, their nature, the consequences, and above all, a departure from the traditional perceptions of them in terms of the armed conflicts of our past (the First and Second World Wars), i.e. a linear course.

The following elements should be taken into account when viewing and defining them:

1. progressive and pervasive globalization affecting the causes, course and nature of armed conflicts,
2. the progressive and pervasive globalization affecting the military sphere,
3. the loss by states of their monopoly on the exclusive disposal of armed forces, which was previously reserved for these entities,
4. the emergence of non-state actors who are active participants in many conflicts, including armed conflicts,
5. the involvement of non-state actors in armed conflicts by states,

6. access to dual-use technologies, with an indication of the scale of the phenomenon,
7. the spaces of armed conflict: land, sea, deep sea, air, space, cyberspace and the human mind are not reserved for states, their armed forces, special services or police services,
8. scientific and technological progress (information and communication technology) and technology,
9. cyberspace, a new space of conflicts, that can lead, among other things, to the physical destruction of the enemy and armed conflict,
10. cyberspace is the possibility of a new generation of weapons (e.g. electromagnetic weapons, radio frequency weapons and particle weapons),
11. new means of warfare: laser weapons, ultrasonic weapons, plasma weapons, vacuum weapons, psychophysical weapons, radiation weapons, hypersonic weapons and others.

“The distance noticeable in the development of countries and regions is increasingly widening. Its driving force is primarily states that are politically, economically and militarily strong, as well as access to dual-use technologies. The progressive dependence manifests itself, among other things, in imposing cultural patterns considered only legitimate, restricting access to achievements in the sphere of science and technology and to modern production technologies, limiting access to natural resources (including energy), waging trade wars, failing to abide by international treaties, fuelling the spiral of armaments, recognizing hostile ideas, fuelling migration movements, initiating internal conflicts and internationalizing them. These types of actions translate into already existing differences in the development of professional groups, national, ethnic and religious minorities, as well as nations and societies.”²⁴ The civilization gap, which is bipolar in nature, is widening more and more:

- at one pole are material prosperity, political participation, openness to modernity of cultural and civilizational signs,
- on the other is the sphere of deprivation, poverty, alienation from political life, attitudes of non-adaptation to the emerging information order, extreme attitudes, alienation and social exclusion.²⁵

²⁴ A. Żebrowski, *Globalna przestrzeń zagrożeń. Wybrane aspekty*, Wydawnictwo Sztafeta, Kraków 2018, p. 75.

²⁵ A. Chodubski, *Asymetryczne zagrożenia cywilizacyjne a istota bezpieczeństwa państwa*

This second pole is particularly dangerous, as asymmetry relative to the first pole is a potential source of violent (armed and/or non-armed) conflict. Occurring (progressive) asymmetry can be the cause of the outbreak of a new armed conflict of an asymmetric nature. This means that the other pole, due to limited development opportunities, also has limited chances of access to modern armaments, which implies that it will seek such forms and means that will allow it to carry out a precise strike on the place(s) vulnerable to destructive attack using, for example, kinetic or electromagnetic energy, ICT and communication techniques. The aggressive foreign policy of dominant states, supported by information warfare, contributes to the fact that such a scenario is currently being constructed. In extreme cases it takes the form of a violent, asymmetric conflict.

The ongoing discourse on future armed (non-armed) conflicts takes into account a wide spectrum of asymmetric features. It should be noted that the differences that exist in their development directly translate into limited access to modern means of destruction or lack thereof, resulting in the search for such methods and means, the effects of which will compensate for economic, technical and military backwardness. It is worth bearing in mind that it is possible to use many means available in the retail market (e.g. transportation: road, rail, air and water), which, with imagination, can also be used for destructive actions.

Based on the available literature, it is possible to identify features of current and future armed conflicts that have asymmetric characteristics, which will be a consequence of the existence of significant differences in the scientific, economic-defence and military potentials of individual countries and even regions. The President of the United States has announced the exit from the INF disarmament treaty (treaty on the complete elimination of intermediate-range missiles²⁶), accusing Russia of failing to comply with it. It is worth bearing in mind that currently (as of 2018) 32 countries have intermediate-range missiles and the capability to produce them. Moreover, many countries are not bound by the INF Treaty, such as China, India and Pakistan. This situation will most likely result in

polskiego, in: S. Wojciechowski, R. Fiedler (eds.), *Zagrożenia asymetryczne współczesnego świata*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe WNOiD UAM, Poznań 2009, p. 35.

²⁶ INF Treaty – treaty on the complete elimination of intermediate-range ballistic missiles. An international agreement concluded on 7 December 1987 in Washington between the United States and the Soviet Union on the complete elimination of the two contracting parties' arsenals of intermediate-range ballistic missiles (IRBMs) and medium-range ballistic missiles (MRBMs) and the prohibition of their production, storage and use. Signed by US President Ronald Reagan and First Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev. Ratified by the US Senate on 27 May 1988, it entered into force on 1 June 1988.

another arms race. In addition, the lack of international control over the production and proliferation of such weapons will allow state actors (who do not have production capabilities), as well as non-state actors, to gain possession of them, which will increase the threat of carrying out a strike of an asymmetric nature (including pre-emptive strikes).

Accordingly, it is possible to identify features of current and future armed conflicts with asymmetric dimensions:

- First, the threat of war (including of an asymmetric nature) will remain real, the probability of large-scale conflicts will remain low (however, it should not be excluded), turbulently increasing, while the number of conflicts limited in scale, objectives and forms will increase; the primary determinant of the characteristics of the conflict will be the level of technological development and economic affluence of the parties (they will be a source of progressive differentiation in access to modern solutions); military actions will increasingly serve to exploit opportunities rather than counter threats; the processes of direction and flare will be implemented in real time; the direction (command) of troops will be replaced by the direction of war and armed struggle; the focuses on non-combat impacts will increase while decreasing on combat elements; the problems of deterrence, information warfare, special warfare, etc. will be transferred to a higher, political level. The integration of civilian and military activities will increase; military activities other than war will become the primary area of activities of the armed forces and will be, as a rule, combined in dimensions: national-international, civil-military, combatant-noncombatant, and in terms of types of armed forces; the role of ground troops will decrease and their character will change; technologies enabling activities in space will increasingly determine the possibility, efficiency and character of activities in other spheres.
- Secondly: armed struggle in the future will be specific to society and information civilization (deepening the existing differences in development), taking advantage of its opportunities; it will be more subordinated to geopolitics and geo-economics; it will become a more frequent means of pursuing economic interests; it will guarantee permanent political solutions, security stability to a lesser extent; it will also be fought between non-state actors or in their interests; it will be increasingly complex, multidimensional, diverse in forms, combinations of means and tools will also become more complex; it will be less often a planned policy measure, and more often the result of escalation in situations where non-military means are ineffective; it will be increasingly

asymmetric and indirect, even more surprising and difficult to forecast, scenario planning; it will be fought in new centres whose importance will increase (space, infosphere, new forms of energy – an example of asymmetry); new forms and dimensions of deterrence will emerge (within the framework of asymmetric actions); the role of weapons of mass destruction and, at the same time, security of systems will increase; armed struggle will raise new and different problems and dilemmas of leadership, execution, morality, etc.²⁷

The development of science, technology and, above all, modern production technologies is gradually leading to an increase in the combat capability of the military, both in the sphere of early detection and precise reconnaissance, and effective destruction of recognized objects. This involves next-generation equipment and armaments with high destructive (physical) power against the enemy. Such a level of science and technology is available only to a few countries with strong political, defence-military, economic and financial potentials, introduction of innovative solutions, open to any changes occurring in the internal and external environment of the state, adapting to emerging challenges, i.e. opportunities and threats, including those of a military nature. In addition, the ability to penetrate the personal and technical information space on a global scale makes it possible to adapt current scientific and military potential to the changes that are taking place.

The evolving global security space, where international rivalries taking the form of military and non-military conflicts are ongoing, is changing the human environment using the achievements of science and technology in this multi-faceted confrontation. The turn of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries is also a new approach to ongoing combat operations, where new trends and directions in the development of means of armed combat and concepts as to their use on the modern battlefield are evident. In ongoing as well as in future combat, the following actions will dominate: irregular, unconventional, dispersed, point, sabotage and diversion, retaliation, guerrilla, combined, terrorist, information, cyber attacks, computer crime, etc. “Activities of this nature are fostered by, among other things:

1. lightweight, autonomous, multifunctional and effective weapons,

²⁷ Position of the Head of the Department of Strategy at the Academy of National Defence, cited in: B. Balcerowicz, *Sily zbrojne w stanie pokoju, kryzysu, wojny*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, Warszawa 2010, pp. 176–177.

2. modern optoelectronics,
3. a new generation of artillery and munitions (circulating munitions), and a new generation anti-tank missiles and anti-aircraft missiles, both guided and self-guided, with increased destructive power,
4. a new generation of self-guided missiles, ammunition and mines capable of individually selecting targets, see and forget, penetrating missiles, fuel-air missiles and mines, cluster missiles, etc.,
5. aircraft with very different characteristics and performance: helicopters (combat, transport and multi-purpose) capable of rapid manoeuvre and re-deployment of troops, effective and strong support of the fighting troops with fire, targeting enemy facilities and placing mine barriers; multi-purpose aircraft with very good tactical and technical parameters, reconnaissance and strike aircraft, supporting the fighting troops, interacting with anti-aircraft artillery and maintaining air superiority (e.g. application of stealth technology); unmanned remotely piloted or self-guided aircraft (reconnaissance, strike, for remote erratic mines, logistical security),
6. vessels – reconnaissance, high-speed, multi-purpose, equipped with reconnaissance and strike systems that enable effective fire in various conditions and in various means of combat,
7. support equipment – reconnaissance, engineering, evacuation with greater manoeuvrability; on a unified armoured chassis; multi-functional, performing tasks in difficult terrain; equipped with effective means of defence,
8. modern technologies (new types of plastics for the construction of light-weight and mechanically strong structures and armour, resistant to environmental effects, absorbing neutron radiation; paints and varnishes capable of suppressing electromagnetic pulses, scattering heat radiation, absorbing laser beams; substances with super-sticky and hardening properties that, when sprayed over enemy troops, immobilize equipment and paralyse soldiers),
9. multi-functional information systems; multi-application smart sensors (multi-purpose sensors); electronic devices operating at terahertz speeds; secure broadband communications; techniques for designing and manufacturing modern structural materials; methods and techniques for designing and manufacturing integrated and autonomous systems.”²⁸

Ongoing conflicts are accompanied by an arms race, where hypersonic weapons, for example, are of interest to many countries, especially those whose

²⁸ S. Dworecki, *Od konfliktu...*, op. cit., pp. 149, 151, 154–155.

position in the international arena and, above all, scientific, economic and financial potentials allow them to direct their research into such weapons. Speaking of this type of weapon, the most common reference is to gliding missiles, the so-called gliders, which move at speeds many times faster than existing missiles and are virtually undetectable by radar.²⁹ This could mean that the nuclear potentials of a handful of countries will be useless, as they could be destroyed in the run-up to an armed conflict. Whoever first comes into possession of hypersonic weapons will violate (or even overthrow) the existing rules of warfare.

Also, electromagnetic jamming (electromagnetic bombs) of reconnaissance, and guidance systems of laser weapons, will be intensively disrupted. Particularly vulnerable to electronic and kinetic attack in the period preceding the outbreak of armed conflict and in its first phase are missiles located in launchers or silos. All potential combatants conduct peacetime reconnaissance of the regions of deployment of such weapons, on which a pre-emptive strikes will be carried out, as they are treated as first-strike objects.

The current human environment is dominated by global information conflict, where information supports ideology, politics and propaganda, disinformation and lies, and cover-ups dominate global communication. Ongoing political and social discourse, with diverse backgrounds, reaches every individual, social group and nation, and who are bombarded with information with the goal of disrupting their perception of perception.

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²⁹ *Bron hipersoniczna – najszybszy wyścig zbrojeń w historii*, Młody Technik, <https://mlo-dytechnik.pl/technika/29117-bron-hipersoniczna-najszybszy-wyscig-zbrojen-w-historii>, (accessed 08.10.2023).

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Summary

Current and, above all, future military and non-military conflicts are testing grounds for their participants. In mind should be those states whose potential allows them to participate in the economic and military race in search of qualitatively new means of physical destruction. They are supported by scientific and technological progress, which is adopted for the needs of modern states and their armed forces. The transformations that are taking place in the global security space have an impact on the forms, methods and also the means of cooperation used. The saturation of modern means of state management, command, communications, reconnaissance and arms control by ICT and communications technology means a change in the current battlefield. This technology is shaping another theatre of warfare, which is cyberspace, making it possible to effectively interact with soldiers, the enemy's civilian population and one's own. They are part of the global information warfare that dominates the field of confrontation in the military and non-military spheres.

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ANALYSIS OF THE CITY OF SŁUPSK'S READINESS FOR CYBERSECURITY THREATS – A CASE STUDY: HACKER ATTACK ON THE SHARED SERVICES CENTRE

ANALIZA GOTOWOŚCI MIASTA SŁUPSKA DO STAWIANIA CZOŁA ZAGROŻENIOM CYBERBEZPIECZEŃSTWA – STUDIUM PRZYPADKU: ATAK HAKERÓW NA CENTRUM USŁUG WSPÓLNYCH

Abstract: In August 2022, a breach occurred on the city servers belonging to the Centre for Shared Services, resulting in the encryption of data stored there, including the personal information of teachers from Słupsk County. The purpose of this article is to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the city in relation to this situation, based on both official documents and communications, as well as the opinions of the affected individuals.

Zarys treści: W sierpniu 2022 roku doszło do włamania na miejskie serwery należące do Centrum Usług Wspólnych oraz do zaszyfrowania przechowywanych tam danych nauczycieli powiatu słupskiego. Celem niniejszego artykułu jest dokonanie analizy mocnych i słabych stron miasta w odniesieniu do wspomnianej sytuacji zarówno na podstawie oficjalnych dokumentów i komunikatów, jak również opinii środowiskowych pokrzywdzonych osób.

Keywords: cybersecurity, Słupsk, CUW, SWOT analysis, teachers.

Słowa kluczowe: cyberbezpieczeństwo, Słupsk, CUW, analiza SWOT, nauczyciele.

Introduction

The nature of the modern world, marked by a significant and rapid surge in technological advancement, has not only facilitated social development but also introduced new problems and challenges not solely related to social behaviours, attitudes, addictions or diseases. Cybersecurity has emerged as one of the most critical challenges of the contemporary era, where digital infrastructure plays a key role in the daily functioning of societies, economies and governments.

Cybersecurity encompasses all categories directly linked to the broader concept of security, applied specifically to telecommunication and information networks. It addresses issues related to information, communication and network architecture, including threats affecting these domains.¹ As reliance on technology grows and advanced solutions like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT) and cloud computing become increasingly prevalent, the risks of cyberattacks also rise. Hackers and organised criminal groups continuously seek new ways to exploit vulnerabilities in systems, putting millions of people at risk of data breaches, service disruptions and significant financial losses. Alongside hate speech and online harassment, cybercrime ranks as one of the greatest challenges for Internet users.² Consequently, cybersecurity is not merely a technological concern but also a strategic priority for organizations and governments worldwide.

However, it is worth questioning whether institutions are genuinely prepared to prevent and combat cybercrime. This task is particularly challenging given the rapid evolution of hacking tools and phishing techniques, necessitating constant updates to security measures. This paper aims to examine the case of a hacker attack targeting data belonging to the Shared Services Centre (referred to as CUW), which operates under the Municipal Office of Słupsk, with the goal of conducting a SWOT analysis of the city's services in the context of cybersecurity threats.

¹ K. Chałubińska-Jentkiewicz, *Cyberbezpieczeństwo – zagadnienia definicyjne*, “Cybersecurity and Law” 2019, vol. 2, p. 13.

² T. Peta, *Przejawy agresji i mowy nienawiści w Internecie – analiza komentarzy na wybranych stronach portali informacyjnych*, “Social Studies: Theory and Practice” 2021, vol. 1, p. 118.

Attack on data – year 2022

The Shared Services Centre (CUW) in Słupsk provides financial and HR services to educational institutions in the city. It also manages student scholarships and debt collection. As a result, it holds sensitive data for approximately 1,200 teachers and additional individuals employed under various agreements, such as contracts for services. Altogether, it is estimated that the CUW stores information on around 1,500 individuals.³ On 26 August 2022, news broke of a cyberattack on the server of Słupsk's Shared Services Centre. According to the City Hall, no data leakage occurred during the incident; instead, the data was encrypted. The perpetrators demanded a ransom in Bitcoin worth tens of thousands of euros in exchange for decryption. The city refused to pay, citing past incidents where such agreements were not honoured.⁴ Teachers were promptly informed of the breach and advised on the possibility of replacing their identification documents or purchasing a paid notification service to alert them if their PESEL number was used for credit fraud. It was also emphasized that the incident would not disrupt salary payments, as the encrypted data was also available in physical, paper form within the CUW's premises. Following consultations with CERT Polska, an organization specialising in responding to cybersecurity incidents, it was determined that the group responsible for the attack had no prior record of stealing data outright. An analysis of data transmission and bandwidth confirmed that no significant data extraction occurred during this attack. The infected server was immediately disconnected from the network. Additionally, rumours of student data being compromised were refuted, as such information is not included in the CUW's databases.⁵

³ P. Woś, *Pracownicy oświaty w Słupsku dostaną wypłaty na czas. CUW odzyskuje dane po ataku hakerskim*, Radio Gdańsk, <https://radiogdansk.pl/wiadomosci/region/slupsk/2022/08/26/pracownicy-oswiaty-w-slupsku-dostana-wypłaty-na-czas-cuw-odzyskuje-dane-po-ataku-hakerskim/>, (accessed 24.11.2024).

⁴ G. Hilarecki, *Atak hakerski na bazę z danymi nauczycieli w Słupsku. Żądają od miasta okupu w bitcoinach*, GP24.pl, <https://gp24.pl/atak-hakerski-na-baze-z-danymi-nauczycieli-w-slupsku-zadaja-od-miasta-okupu-w-bitcoinach/ar/c1-16797833>, (accessed 24.11.2024).

⁵ P. Woś, *Hakerzy nie wykradli danych z CUW w Słupsku. Plików wciąż nie udało się jednak odblokować*, Radio Gdańsk, <https://radiogdansk.pl/wiadomosci/region/slupsk/2022/08/31/hakerzy-nie-wykradli-danych-z-cuw-w-slupsku-plikow-wciaz-nie-udalo-sie-jednak-odblokowac/>, (accessed 27.11.2024).

In the aftermath, a spokesperson for the Słupsk City Hall initiated an audit of the municipal IT systems to identify any vulnerabilities that might have facilitated the attack. The review confirmed that passwords had not been changed recently, but the security measures, including firewalls, antivirus programs and the IT team's oversight, were deemed adequate. No breaches in protocol were identified.⁶

The police were also notified of the incident and an official report was filed regarding unauthorized access to one of the City Hall's servers. The investigation proceeded under Article 268a of the Polish Penal Code:

“Article 268a. [Destruction of IT Data]

§1. Whoever, without authorization, destroys, damages, deletes, alters, or hinders access to IT data, or significantly disrupts or prevents the automated processing, collection, or transmission of such data, shall be subject to imprisonment for up to 3 years.

§2. Whoever commits the act described in §1, causing significant financial harm, shall be subject to imprisonment from 3 months to 5 years.

§3. Prosecution of offences under §1 or §2 is initiated upon the victim's request.”⁷

As of now, no information about the apprehension of the perpetrators has been reported.

Encryption of CUW data – perspectives of affected teachers

For the purpose of this article, interviews were conducted with two teachers from educational institutions in Słupsk, including schools and preschools, to present the situation from the perspective of those directly affected by the incident. The interviewees were asked to describe the actions undertaken by the City Hall, other institutions and themselves to prevent and safeguard against data theft, both personally and within their professional communities of fellow teachers.

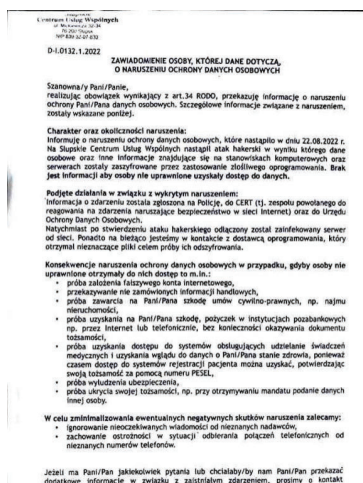
Respondent 1 stated that she did not take any additional measures to protect her personal data. Despite concerns among her preschool department

⁶ K. Pyszkowska, *Atak hakerski na slupski magistrat i prywatne firmy*, *Zawsze Pomorze*, <https://www.zawszepomorze.pl/arttykul/4734,atak-hakerski-na-slupski-magistrat-i-prywatne-firmy>, (accessed 27.11.2024).

⁷ Penal Code Act of 6 June 1997, Dz.U. (Journal of Laws) 2025, item 383.

colleagues, she placed her trust in the city's assurances that the stored data was secure and that their financial well-being was not at risk. However, she emphasised that the first few days following the disclosure of the attack were the most stressful. The respondent noted that teachers were the first to be informed of the incident, receiving notification via letter. A copy of the notification is presented below:

Figure 1. Notification of a Personal Data Protection Breach, sent in August 2022 by CUW to teachers



Source: the private archive of respondent.

The respondent noted that aside from exercising additional caution when handling messages or phone calls from unknown senders, the CUW did not suggest taking any specific steps, such as replacing identification documents or subscribing to BIK (Credit Information Bureau) notifications. These notifications alert individuals if their data is used to apply for loans or credit or sign contracts.⁸ Actions of this nature were initiated independently by teachers and their acquaintances. When asked to evaluate the city's response, the respondent expressed no criticism, considering the measures taken to be sufficient.

In contrast, the second respondent displayed significantly less composure. She admitted that nearly her entire teaching team, after receiving the letters from the CUW, experienced a mild panic. Many decided to replace their identification documents and monitor their credit information. Additionally, some

⁸ *Alerty BIK 24/7*, BIK, <https://www.bik.pl/klienci-indywidualni/alerty-bik>, (accessed 27.11.2024).

individuals filed separate reports of the crime at the local police station alongside the City Hall's notification. Although these reports were supported by the opinion of an IT forensic expert from the District Court in Słupsk, the case was eventually dismissed. It is noteworthy that the suggestion to subscribe to BIK services or secure personal ID documents originated directly from the school's administration. Despite assurances that there was no immediate threat of data leakage, the administration sought to protect its employees. The respondent recalled that the first few weeks following the incident were stressful for most of her colleagues. Many worried about their financial security, anxiously seeking updates on the apprehension of the perpetrators or fearing that loans might be fraudulently taken out in their names. Even as time passed, the respondent remained critical, believing that the City Hall could have done more to protect and prevent such incidents.

These responses highlight differences in crisis reactions; some individuals displayed greater initiative, while others placed more trust in the city authorities. However, it is clear that the perceived level of threat among most teachers was similar. The data breach was a highly stressful event, raising concerns about personal safety, financial security and data protection.

New personal data protection policy

On 31 October 2024, Directive No. 18/2024 of the Director of the Shared Services Centre of the Słupsk County came into effect, introducing the Personal Data Protection Policy. Chapter II of the document states that its purpose is to safeguard personal data processed by the CUW, establish rules for their storage and codify principles and standards for their management.

The directive outlines several key elements of the data protection system. Notable preventative measures include:

- conducting risk analyses to assess potential violations of the rights and freedoms of individuals whose data is processed,
- maintaining a registry of individuals authorized to process personal data,
- ensuring that personal data processing occurs in conditions that prevent access by unauthorized persons,
- keeping a data processing register,
- enhancing protection for both digital and non-digital data,

- appointing a Data Protection Officer (DPO) to oversee and monitor the personal data processing process,
- implementing a contractor evaluation procedure in cases where data must be processed by third parties.⁹

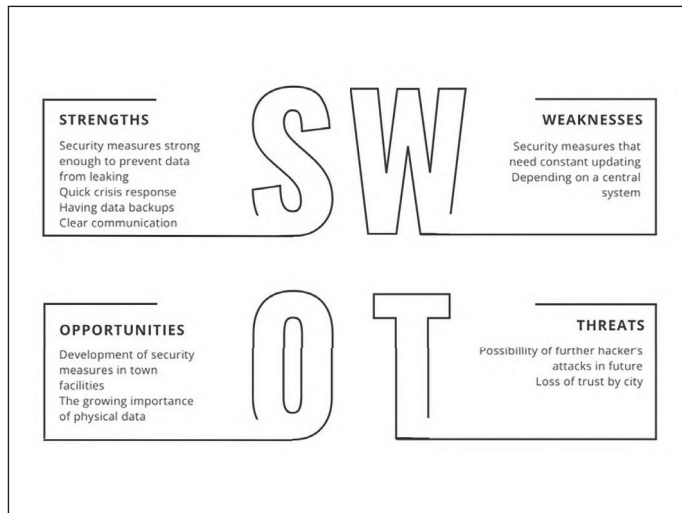
These measures aim to enhance the cybersecurity of entities operating under the Słupsk City Hall.

SWOT analysis

SWOT analysis is a method of organising information that facilitates drawing conclusions for the strategic evaluation of entities. It considers both tangible and intangible factors, as well as internal and external aspects.¹⁰

Taking into account all the information presented above, a SWOT analysis form was created to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. This is outlined below.

Figure 2. SWOT Analysis Sheet of the Shared Services Centre of the Słupsk County



Source: own study.

⁹ Zarządzenie nr 18/2024 Dyrektora Centrum Usług Wspólnych powiatu słupskiego, <https://bip.cuw.powiat.słupsk.pl/pliki/powiat-słupski-cuw/zalaczniki/193/polityka-ochrony-danych-osobowych-2024-sig.pdf>, (accessed 3.12.2024).

¹⁰ Ł. Szałata, J. Zwoździak, *Analiza SWOT jako podstawowe narzędzie w zarządzaniu środowiskiem*, "Rocznik Ochrona Środowiska" 2011, vol. 13, pp. 1105–1106.

Analysing the actions of the CUW in relation to the cyberattack of 2022, both positive and negative aspects can be identified. First and foremost, a strong point of the institution is the security measures that were sufficiently advanced to only allow encryption of the data, without any leakage. Additionally, thanks to a quick response, the infected system was almost immediately disconnected upon detecting the breach. The facility was able to continue its operations due to physical backup copies of data, which also constitutes a strength. Finally, it is worth appreciating the direct communication from the city regarding the issues – every person affected by the crisis was informed about the situation. The media were also kept up to date with the ongoing actions, without any attempts to conceal information. This demonstrates the confidence of the authorities.

In terms of weaknesses, it is important to mention aspects resulting from the nature of technological devices and the Internet. The constant development of technology and the emergence of new solutions means that the security systems used in the institutions must be constantly updated to keep pace with new methods of breaching them. Furthermore, the situation revealed problems related to the use of a centralised system – a failure of the central unit causes paralysis in all dependent entities. These are, however, aspects that can be improved on or eliminated.

There are also opportunities arising from the resolved situation. The crisis, among other things, led to the development of security measures used by the City Hall, as well as the updating of data processing procedures aimed at improving security and further preventing potential leaks. The new conditions include both digital and physical data storage and access control measures – the most important changes were outlined in the previous subsection. The second category, in particular, is encouraging – physical data remains crucial, despite the ongoing digitisation process; the crisis only reinforced this conviction. Of course, this does not mean that digitisation should be abandoned. It is a completely natural process associated with the inevitable technological progress. However, especially at the administrative level, security measures should be maintained at an appropriately high level. The current crisis should serve as a reason for improvements in this area; this could include the use of modern encryption methods such as AES or DES. An increasingly common solution is also the creation of VPNs, virtual private networks that provide secure, private environments for individuals and corporations. Finally, artificial intelligence can also be used to enhance the security of stored data.

However, the fact remains that threats continue to exist. Of course, the servers of the institutions belonging to the city are still exposed to future attacks as such risks cannot be fully eliminated, as they are constant threat. The situation also contributed to a partial loss of trust in the city's institutions, but this is a natural consequence that the City Hall had little control over. A crisis occurred, a response was initiated, and it was resolved, however, certain concerns and questioning of the effectiveness of the security measures and actions of the institutions remain. Now, it is up to the city to overcome the mentioned threats.

Conclusions

Considering all the above findings, an overall summary of the city of Słupsk's readiness for cybersecurity threats can be made. The city seems to be prepared to counteract cybercriminal attacks, characterised by a quick response time, clear communication with institutions, the media and affected individuals, as well as updated methods for preventing such crises. Achieving 100% security is impossible, so regardless of public sentiment, the readiness should be assessed positively. The strengths outweigh the weaknesses and there are more opportunities than direct threats. However, it should be remembered that cybersecurity involves ongoing efforts to improve security measures and thus, with proper attention dedicated to this issue, the city is capable of preventing future attacks.

The 2022 situation served as a valuable lesson for the City Hall, and it would be good if this lesson was well-learned. For this to happen, the development of infrastructure should progress in both the physical and digital management areas. In the physical domain, efforts should focus on minimising human errors through proper training and preparing employees for data management, as well as ensuring the appropriate preparation and storage of physical data backups. In the digital domain, it would be highly advisable to use modern solutions that can enhance the security of city administration, such as advanced encryption, AI and VPNs.

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Penal Code Act of 6 June 1997, Dz.U. (Journal of Laws) 2025, item 383.

Summary

In recent years, particularly during the cyberattack on Słupsk’s Shared Services Centre, the city faced a significant test of its preparedness to counter cybercrime. Clear communication, a swift response and the modernisation of existing security protocols have led to an overall positive assessment of these efforts. However, it remains true that the opinions of those directly affected by the attack vary and, given their emotional nature, are often critical of the City Hall. Regardless of these evaluations, the dual approach to data storage, both electronic and physical, deserves recognition.

Oryginalna praca badawcza

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THE WAR IN UKRAINE AND POLISH SECURITY AS PERCEIVED BY THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

WOJNA NA UKRAINIE A BEZPIECZEŃSTWO POLSKI W OCZACH LOKALNEJ SPOŁECZNOŚCI

Abstract: The Russian invasion of Ukraine was a turning point for the global security architecture. In a globalised, interdependent world, such a war cannot be confined to one region. We cannot limit its impact on the security of Poland's society or eliminate its citizens' sense of fear. This new type of hybrid war, involving a serious humanitarian and economic crisis and hardship, as well as disinformation and propaganda campaigns and far-reaching political tensions over energy supplies and the threat of nuclear war, will have far-reaching consequences. The outbreak of this military conflict represents a watershed period and forces a shift in regional and global security thinking. This change has brought about transformations in foreign policy, as well as influenced our social and economic life, leaving its mark on Poles' sense of security. This article presents the results of an original empirical study in which various aspects of the perception of the conflict in Ukraine related to Poland's security are presented.

Zarys treści: Rosyjska inwazja na Ukrainę była punktem zwrotnym dla globalnej architektury bezpieczeństwa. W zglobalizowanym, współzależnym świecie taka wojna nie może być ograniczona do jednego regionu. Nie możemy ograniczyć jej wpływu na bezpieczeństwo społeczeństwa polskiego ani wyeliminować poczucia strachu u obywateli. Ten nowy rodzaj wojny hybrydowej, wiążący się z poważnymi

kryzysami oraz trudnościami humanitarnymi i gospodarczymi, a także kampaniami dezinformacyjnymi i propagandowymi, daleko idącymi napięciami politycznymi dotyczącymi dostaw energii oraz groźbą wojny nuklearnej, będzie miał dalekosiężne konsekwencje. Wybuch tego konfliktu zbrojnego stanowi przełomowe wydarzenie i wymusza zmianę w myśleniu o bezpieczeństwie regionalnym i globalnym. Zmiana ta pociągnęła za sobą przeobrażenia w polityce zagranicznej, a także wpłynęła na nasze życie społeczne i gospodarcze i odcisnęła piętno na poczuciu bezpieczeństwa Polaków. Artykuł prezentuje wyniki oryginalnego badania empirycznego, w którym przedstawiono różne aspekty postrzegania konfliktu w Ukrainie związane z bezpieczeństwem Polski.

Keywords: state security, Poles, war in Ukraine.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo państwa, Polacy, wojna na Ukrainie.

Introduction

Security is ranked among the most important needs and values of every human being. It represents both a personal and a social good in local, national and global terms. The need for security is one of the basic human needs, although the history of mankind's existence largely comprises the history of wars and conflicts involving the use of military force. War and peace are elements that have accompanied the world from the dawn of human existence up to the present day, and give rise to the interest of states and societies. Russia's military attack on Ukraine has brought about transformations affecting our social and economic life. The Russian-Ukrainian war, launched by the Russian attack on 24 February 2022, has influenced the future overall security of the world. Entrenched Russian imperialism has taken an unheard-of form since the end of the Second World War, where the independence of the sovereign state of Ukraine has been violated, through the slaughter and looting of civilians, and where there is no chance of victory, towns and villages are destroyed and civilians are kidnapped and taken deep into Russia. The passing of time has proven that the war in Ukraine has reached many aspects of the functioning of states in its political, legal, economic and social dimensions. In relation to Poland, this is not a war that is a geographically distant theatre of operations. It is being waged near our border and directly affects

the security of Poland and its neighbours, but also the security of Europe. Its impact also has global repercussions. The war in Ukraine has led to a general heightened sense of insecurity among the public about the occurrence of similar events in Poland. The media machine and a range of propaganda information in the Internet space are increasing this feeling of fear. The subject of the research, the results of which are presented in this article, is the ongoing armed conflict in Ukraine and the related security of Poland. The aim of the research was to assess the opinion of the local community regarding the security of Poland with this support of Ukraine as a result of the escalation of the war in 2022. The main research problem was formulated in the form of the question: What effects will the Russian invasion of Ukraine have on Poland's security? In relation to the question thus posed, the following specific questions arise: Will the Russian invasion of Ukraine evolve into a migration crisis? How has the war caused a change in the perception of the security of Poland as perceived by the local community? How will the Russian invasion of Ukraine change the regional security architecture?

For further consideration and analysis, a hypothesis was adopted assuming that the full-scale Russian attack on Ukraine, which increased feelings of threat to Poland's security among Poles, translated into an increase in support for tighter restrictions in relations with Russia and increased aid to Ukraine. In order to achieve the stated aim of the study and to obtain an answer to the problem question posed above, a survey in the Starogard district was conducted in May/June 2024. The research group consisted of a total of 206 people, 113 men and 93 women aged between 18 and 65, living in Starogard Gdański. A diagnostic survey method was used to collect data. The research tool used was a questionnaire, which was filled in by the respondents themselves, which was used to analyse the sense of security of the surveyed local community and allowed for the formulation of final conclusions. The research group was defined in the study, which had the necessary effect of providing a specific answer to each question, and a method of critical analysis was applied to the available source material (articles, reports, monographs). A significant difficulty in the research process was the issue of using available Internet sources in situations where posted articles are clearly propagandistic in nature and thus of little substantive value.

Actions of the Polish authorities in the face of the Ukraine-Russia conflict

The Ukrainian crisis has contributed to the threat to the security of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe. The ongoing strategic activities of the Russian Federation (FR) resulting from the National Security Strategy of Russia are not without significance. In the National Security Strategy of Russia, among others, the following provisions can be seen: ‘Western states (mainly the USA) and NATO, which not only destabilise the situation in the world, but carry out hostile actions against Russia, have been recognised as a source of threats of a military nature’.¹ It is in Poland’s vital interest, on the one hand, to end the conflict as soon as possible and, on the other hand, to reinforce the territory of the Republic with US troops, which would in effect give Poles a greater sense of security. Poland’s influence on developments in Ukraine is limited. The war in Ukraine ‘has raised concerns about the security of Poland and the region, for which threats were seen primarily in the aggressive actions of Russia’.²

The security policy sets out the principles, processes and methods of the state security management system to achieve the desired security outcomes. It also defines the commitment of senior management to the continuous improvement of security in all aspects of its activities. The management bears full responsibility for the level of state security. In Poland’s security policy, Russia has always been a difficult partner, especially after the aggression in Ukraine.³ The war in Ukraine has worsened Poland’s security and increased the sense of threat from Russia. Some Polish political parties, and the journalistic circles supporting them, have had a strong influence in sustaining and strengthening the sense of threat from Russia in a significant part of Polish society. In relation to the processes taking place in Ukraine, one may be particularly surprised by the attitude of certain politicians who, in the face of the threat to the state, look for enemies in neighbouring countries and in the European Union, and at the same time meet with the leaders of European conservative

¹ A. Kwiatkowski, *Bezpieczeństwo Polski w świetle działań wojennych Rosji na Ukrainie*, “De Securitate et Defensione. O Bezpieczeństwie i Obronności” 2023, vol. 9, no. 1, p. 37.

² J. Bornio, *Bezpieczeństwo narodowe Polski w kontekście kryzysu ukraińskiego. Wymiar polityczno-militarny*, Difin, Warszawa 2020, p. 11.

³ M. Stolarczyk, *Dylematy bezpieczeństwa Polski w kontekście kryzysu i konfliktu ukraińskiego w latach 2013–2014*, in: K. Czornik, M. Lakomy (eds.), *Dylematy polityki bezpieczeństwa Polski na początku drugiej dekady XXI wieku*, Wydawnictwo Regionalnego Ośrodka Debaty Międzynarodowej, Katowice 2014, p. 59.

and right-wing parties and promote the Prime Minister of Hungary, Orbán, who has a positive attitude towards the Russian President Putin. Such a negative attitude on the part of some politicians, as well as demonstrating the inability of state institutions to protect and defend citizens, and looking for enemies for themselves, significantly reduces the effective management of the state and the critical opinion of the Polish public.⁴

Public perception of security issues

One of the most powerful and creative sources and elements of Poland's defence strength as a sovereign and democratic nation-state, and as a member of the NATO defence community, is our society. We experienced during the periods of partitions, wars and occupations, as well as the activity of 'Solidarity' (1980–1989) the power of organised patriotism.⁵ We need to be aware of our national weaknesses – 'the hereditary features of our national character that led to the collapse of the Republic, (...) the pathological overgrowth of individualism that does not allow an individual or a group united by a common interest to submit to the will of the majority. In its effects, this leads to anarchy and decomposition of state power'.⁶ In the creation of an effective national defence, it is important to maintain a widespread feeling of love for the fatherland and the need for sacrifice. J. Nowak-Jeziorański stated that 'the most important strategic area, (...) are the issues of youth and its upbringing in the spirit of our traditional values'.⁷ It is becoming a subject of politics, and the neutralisation of threats, the strengthening of the condition of security structures and the management of potential risks are indispensable actions, being the result of resistance to unfavourable changes in international relations.⁸ Security, like any concept with a very broad scope, is an ambiguous concept and can be considered from various aspects.⁹

In the objective aspect, security is the overall actions of other actors in society that are disadvantageous and dangerous for the subject in question, or in the

⁴ A. Kwiatkowski, op. cit, p. 37.

⁵ R.P. Depczyński, *Edukacja patriotyczna młodzieży. Szkoła Rycerska, Korpusy Kadetów, Ogólnokształcące Licea Wojskowe, Klasy mundurowe*, SOWA, Warszawa 2013, p. 74.

⁶ J. Nowak-Jeziorański, *Polska wczoraj, dziś i jutro*, Czytelnik, Warszawa 1999, p. 211.

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ J. Stańczyk, *Współczesne pojmowanie bezpieczeństwa*, Tezeusz, Warszawa 1996, p. 67.

⁹ D. Czarnecki, N. Tsyhanovska, D.W. Skalski, *Zarządzanie i bezpieczeństwo w administracji publicznej. Wybrane zagadnienia*, PSW, Starogard Gdański–Charków 2023, p. 174.

subjective aspect, i.e. the state of the psyche, awareness, assessment of threats and actions. The social perception of security is therefore based on knowledge shaped by mass media, election campaigns, public opinion and public debate. In the social debate on security alternative realities are constructed and, in terms of their reach and power of influence, sometimes even surpassing expert opinions. They condition the political actions taken: they legitimise their legitimacy, decide on the allocation of resources for them and create pressure on those in power to solve the problem. Finally, empowered with the ability to make political decisions, citizens have the ability to create a new international situation – they decide to join an international structure, dismiss those in power because of unfavourable security policies and sometimes create international or supranational bodies.¹⁰ The author of the study believes that reflection on the social perception of state security as a result of the escalation of the war in Ukraine is an important and potentially fertile direction of analysis of the state of security of local communities. It causes the authorities to focus on exploring the research process by understanding the surrounding phenomena in time and space. This significantly broadens the research perspective, increasing the formulation of new problems in the study of local community opinion.

Research findings

The Russian-Ukrainian conflict affects Poland's security primarily due to the two countries' proximity. Hostilities in Ukraine directly affect local communities, causing a period of great uncertainty and lowering the sense of security of those fearing for their future. The questions posed to respondents were intended to bring out their opinions on the Russian-Ukrainian war. Respondents responded to statements selected by the author of the study regarding the war in Ukraine: their own fears, the reception of refugees in the local community, the presentation of the risk of Russia's aggression against NATO countries, the increase in citizens' security through the actions of the state authorities and forms of assistance for Ukrainian citizens. Below is the structure of the sample of people who took part in the study.

¹⁰ W. Jagiełło, *Wybrane problemy bezpieczeństwa państw, narodów oraz społeczności lokalnych na początku XXI wieku*, PWSZ, Wałbrzych 2008, p. 38.

Table 1. Structure of the study sample

Variable		The percentage of respondents
Gender structure		
Women	93	45%
Men	113	55%
The structure of education		
Higher	103	50%
Secondary	69	32%
Vocational	31	15%
Primary	3	1%
Age structure		
18–25	20	10%
26–34	48	23%
35–44	55	27%
45–54	44	21%
55–65	39	19%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

Analysis of the research shows more than half of the respondents, 74%, considered that the war in Ukraine directly threatens Poland. The answer ‘Definitely yes’ was given by 32% of respondents (38% of women and 26% of men), and ‘rather yes’ by 42% of respondents (47% of women and 37% of men), 19.5% considered that the war in Ukraine ‘rather does not threaten’ (11% of women and 28% of men) the security of Poland, and 6.5% that it ‘definitely does not threaten’ (4% of women and 9% of men). These results show that more women are concerned about the threat of danger from Poland’s eastern border than men.

Figure 1. Does the war in Ukraine threaten Poland’s security?

Does the war in Ukraine threaten Poland’s security?		
Answer	Women	Men
Definitely yes	38%	26%
Rather yes	47%	37%
Rather not threatening	11%	28%
It definitely does not threaten	4%	9%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

Among respondents, 58% supported accepting refugees from Ukraine. The answer ‘Definitely yes’ was given by 26% of respondents (27% of women and

25% of men), and ‘rather yes’ by 32% of respondents (34% of women and 30% of men), 22% considered ‘rather not’ (20% of women and 25% of men), while a fairly large 16% proportion of respondents replied ‘definitely not’ (13% of women and 18% of men) against accepting refugees from Ukraine. These responses show that the scale of Poles’ support for refugees from Ukraine is decreasing, both among women and men. The analysis also reveals the mentality of the community receiving refugees and their concerns, which could be the basis for indicating to the legislature and society at large what legal steps should be taken and whether the needs of refugees have been taken into account, which will affect the social cohesion of the country.

Figure 2. Do you support the acceptance of refugees from Ukraine?

Do you support the acceptance of refugees from Ukraine?		
Answer	Women	Men
Definitely yes	27%	25%
Rather yes	34%	30%
Rather not threatening	20%	25%
It definitely does not threaten	13%	18%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

The responses also show that more than half of the respondents (74%) exclude the risk of an armed attack by Russia on NATO countries. The answer ‘Definitely yes’ was given by 10% of the respondents (11% of women and 9% of men), and ‘Rather yes’ by 15% of the respondents (16% of women and 15% of men), 44% replied ‘Rather not’ (43% of women and 45% of men), while 30% considered ‘Definitely not’ (30% of women and 31% of men) for an armed attack by Russia on NATO countries. This shows that the majority of men do not fear a conflict between Russia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, increasing all the more the feeling of security in our society.

Fig. 3. Is there a risk of a military attack by Russia on NATO countries?

Is there a risk of a military attack by Russia on NATO countries?		
Answer	Women	Men
Definitely yes	11%	9%
Rather yes	16%	15%
Rather not threatening	43%	45%
It definitely does not threaten	30%	31%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

All respondents (100%) supported increasing the country's security. The response 'Membership of Euro-Atlantic structures' was given by 30% of respondents (30% of women and 30% of men), which shows a high confidence in the NATO security alliance. On the other hand, 'membership of European Union structures' was given by 29% of respondents (31% of women and 27% of men). 'Increasing the size of the army and the reserve system' was favoured by 24.5% (21% of women and 28% of men), 'creating a strategy and protecting citizens' by 6.5% (8% of women and 5% of men), while 'universal defence' was supported by 4.5% of respondents (5% of women and 4% of men). The suggestion for respondents was 'developing the industry of national security capabilities', with 4% of respondents favouring this idea (4% of women and 4% of men), followed by 'cyber warfare' with 1.5% (1% of women and 2% of men). It can be seen from this that Poles want to ensure their security by participating in NATO membership, the EU or increasing the size of the Polish army.

Fig. 4. How to increase Poland's security?

How to increase Poland's security?		
Answer	Women	Men
Membership in Euro-Atlantic NATO structures	30%	30%
Membership in European Union structures	31%	27%
Increase in army personnel and reserve system	21%	28%
Creation of a citizen protection strategy	8%	5%
Universal defence	5%	4%
Development of the national security industry potential	4%	4%
Cyber warfare	1%	2%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

A large majority of respondents, 95% said they supported the government's 'Shield East' programme. The response 'Definitely yes' was given by 73% of respondents, (65% of women and 81% of men) and 'rather yes' by 22% of respondents (30% of women and 14% of men), 3% replied 'rather no' (4% of women and 3% of men), while a very low percentage of respondents, 1.5%, responded 'definitely no' (1% of women and 2% of men) to the government programme. This obviously shows that the National Security Plan 'Shield East' enjoys a great

deal of interest and public support among those surveyed, clearly showing a desire to ensure the security of citizens.

Fig. 5. Do you support the government programme “Shield East”?

Do you support the government programme “Shield East”?		
Answer	Women	Men
Definitely yes	65%	81%
Rather yes	30%	14%
Rather no	4%	3%
Definitely no	1%	2%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

With regard to ‘Increasing the supply of military equipment’, 53.5% of respondents (52% of women and 55% of men) agreed, 40% of respondents (41% of women and 40% of men) agreed to ‘Financial support’, 4.5% suggested ‘Integration of the defence industry into NATO and EU security and defence structures’ (5% of women and 4% of men), while 1.5% suggested ‘Political humanitarian aid’ (2% of women and 1% of men). The vast majority of women and men surveyed favoured increasing the supply of military equipment and financial support, which allows for translation into the immediate military situation in Ukraine and an increased sense of security among Ukrainian citizens.

Fig. 6. What support does Ukraine expect from other countries in the face of the war with Russia?

What support does Ukraine expect from other countries in the face of the war with Russia?		
Answer	Women	Men
Increase in military equipment supplies	52%	55%
Financial support	41%	40%
Integration of the defence industry with NATO and EU security and defence structures	5%	4%
Political and humanitarian assistance	2%	1%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

From the analysis of our own research, we observe a decrease in optimism among the Polish community regarding the outcome of the war in Ukraine. Although a large percentage of respondents assume a positive scenario for Ukraine,

there are now also negative predictions. The statement that ‘Russia will subjugate the whole of Ukraine’ was agreed with by 17% of respondents (19% of women and 15% of men), while to the statement ‘Ukraine will have to give up part of its territory’ 26% of respondents agreed (29% of women and 23% of men), 38.5% agreed with the statement ‘Russia will withdraw from the attacked territories of Ukraine’ (35% of women and 42% of men), while 10% stated that ‘Ukraine will win the war’ (16% of women and 19% of men). The statement ‘Difficult to say’ was agreed with by 1.5% of respondents (2% of women and 1% of men).

Fig. 7. How will the war in Ukraine come to an end?

How will the war in Ukraine come to an end?		
Answer	Women	Men
Russia will subordinate all of Ukraine	19%	15%
Ukraine will have to relinquish part of its territory	29%	23%
Russia will withdraw from the attacked territories of Ukraine	35%	42%
Ukraine will prevail in the war	16%	19%
It is difficult to say	2%	1%

Source: own elaboration based on conducted survey.

Analysis of the results

The aggression against Ukraine has consequences in various areas of social life and impacts society in multiple ways. The majority of the surveyed local community remains convinced that the war in Ukraine threatens our security. There is a prevailing belief that the actions of Ukraine’s allies, the USA and the European Union, regarding the conflict significantly influence security in the region by increasing the supply of military equipment and financial support. It is also worth noting that close cooperation with the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, as well as the deployment of a greater number of American troops in the territory of the Republic of Poland and the eastern flank countries, provides guarantees for the security of our state.

The results of research conducted during the Russian-Ukrainian war most often reveal a dominance of positive or, at least, ambivalent assessments of

integration and social relations between Polish society and economic immigrants from Ukraine. Still, the majority of surveyed women and men also support our country's acceptance of refugees from Ukraine, although there is a significant percentage of individuals critical of providing more assistance to refugees, claiming that it is already sufficient. The perceived threat posed by Russian policy and the lack of trust in the declarations of Russian authorities evidently appear to be existing attitudes within society rather than merely fanciful imaginations resulting from media speculation. It is essential to have the belief among the local community that the risk of an armed attack by Russia on NATO countries is low, which reinforces the effectiveness of the alliance's actions in enhancing the sense of security. The escalation of the war in Ukraine has confirmed that Polish society places great hopes in alliance membership. According to the majority of the surveyed local community, Poland can be confident in the commitment of its allies to the potential defence of our territory. Respondents also believe that the main way to assist Ukraine in the face of war with Russia is by increasing military equipment supplies and financial support. This opinion is also in line with the trends of European societies as well as Ukrainian authorities. Financing military equipment in Ukraine contributes to an increase in their sense of security and enhances their defensive capabilities. When assessing the security of Poland through the lens of the full-scale war in Ukraine, the majority of the local community expressed satisfaction with the actions of the authorities regarding the security of the state; however, the remaining minority was sceptical of these actions, considering them too petty and accusing them of yielding to pressure from Ukrainian authorities and Western European countries. The armed conflict at our border has shattered the foundations of the community's sense of security in our country. The illusion of a safe world has come to an end and we are living witnesses to this unfolding story. It is also worth adding that in a democratic Polish state in which every citizen is a part, defending the homeland also means defending oneself.

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Summary

Russian ambitions and inherent imperialism towards Central and Eastern Europe remain unchanged, characterised by the destabilisation of the region and the weakening of the NATO and EU alliances, and in a broader aspect, the transformation of the global security landscape. The main ally of Poland is the United States, whose cooperation and commitment to Ukraine are indisputable. It is important to remember that in addition to having allied security guarantees, possessing one's own defence capabilities is essential, and even more so, focusing efforts on enhancing the defensive awareness of society. One can also invoke issues related to the mobilisation and integration of the societies of the European Union member states in the face of Russian aggression against Ukraine. This integration of efforts to support Ukraine is a visible point of agreement within the local community; however, a slight decline in support for aid actions towards Ukraine can be observed, albeit it is minimal. The general trend of acceptance for providing military and humanitarian support for Ukraine remains relatively high. It is also worth adding that despite the declared concerns regarding maintenance costs, the idea of defending European values is not abandoned in connection with the armed conflict. The increase in community trust towards NATO and the European Union is a signal that the time for joint action has come for significant forms of assistance for Ukraine's fight.

The aggression against Ukraine has affected various areas of social life in the local community in multiple ways. The author would like to focus attention on three of them. The first is the deterioration of the economic situation: i.e. the rise in energy prices and the associated inflation. The second is the resultant large number of Ukrainian refugees. The third is concerns about security, evidenced by, among other things, the fear of armed

conflict with Russia, as well as the use of weapons of mass destruction or potential radioactive contamination. The expected outcome of the armed conflict in Ukraine is moderately optimistic. There is a noticeable trend regarding the level of perceived fears and uncertainties related to the potential expansion of the conflict to Poland or other countries, as well as the use of nuclear weapons by Russia. Approval for forcing a partial capitulation of Ukraine in exchange for a coerced peace is a short-term gain that, in the longer-term perspective, may lead to the entirety of Europe becoming dependent on Russia and necessitating submission to its will in energy policy, political life and military preparedness. Russian leaders undoubtedly counted on and continue to count on such psychological effects. The conducted research indicates a rare, in Poland, high level of consensus among the community of acceptance of actions taken by the Polish authorities for the security of the Polish state.

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**SECURITY ASPECTS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
IN EASTERN AND CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE CONTEXT
OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR**

**ASPEKTY BEZPIECZEŃSTWA W STOSUNKACH
MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH W EUROPIE ŚRODKOWO-
-WSCHODNIEJ W KONTEKŚCIE WOJNY ROSYJSKO-
-UKRAIŃSKIEJ**

Abstract: The article examines the security dimension of international relations in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The research problem is to identify changes in the security environment of the region and to assess the effectiveness of international mechanisms for deterring aggression and ensuring regional stability in this part of the world. The research goal has been achieved through geopolitical

analysis, content analysis and discourse analysis of the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. This was based on a comprehensive approach that included an assessment of the geostrategic position of states, an analysis of their participation in international organisations, military alliances and security initiatives, as well as an examination of historical, political and economic factors that affect their foreign policy.

Zarys treści: Celem niniejszego artykułu jest analiza wymiaru bezpieczeństwa w stosunkach międzynarodowych w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w kontekście wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej. Problemem badawczym jest identyfikacja zmian w środowisku bezpieczeństwa regionu oraz ocena skuteczności międzynarodowych mechanizmów powstrzymywania agresji i zapewniania stabilności w tej części świata. Założony cel badawczy został osiągnięty poprzez analizę geopolityczną, analizę treści i analizę dyskursu na temat aspektów bezpieczeństwa w stosunkach międzynarodowych w Europie Środkowo-Wschodniej w kontekście wojny rosyjsko-ukraińskiej. To kompleksowe podejście obejmowało ocenę geostrategicznego położenia państw, analizę ich udziału w organizacjach międzynarodowych, sojuszach wojskowych i inicjatywach bezpieczeństwa, a także badanie czynników historycznych, politycznych i ekonomicznych, które wpływają na ich politykę zagraniczną.

Keywords: Eastern and Central Europe, international relations, Russian-Ukrainian war, security, geopolitical challenges.

Słowa kluczowe: Europa Środkowo-Wschodnia, stosunki międzynarodowe, wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska, bezpieczeństwo, wyzwania geopolityczne.

Introduction

The Russian-Ukrainian war has become one of the most serious challenges to the international security system in the 21st century. Its effects have been felt far beyond Ukraine's borders, affecting the political, economic and military relations of Eastern and Central European countries. This war has highlighted the weaknesses of the existing security architecture in the region, in particular, issues of collective defence, energy independence and resilience to hybrid threats. The international community, including the European Union, NATO and other

organisations, has shown considerable interest in stabilising the region, while facing challenges from Russia's geopolitical ambitions. The study of the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war is extremely timely in the face of the enormous challenges that have threatened the stability and security not only of individual states, but also of the European continent as a whole. Firstly, the Russian-Ukrainian war destroyed long-standing mechanisms of peaceful coexistence based on the principles of international law, as Russia's armed aggression against Ukraine has become the largest armed conflict in Europe since World War II, undermining the effectiveness of existing international security structures such as the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the United Nations, among others. Secondly, the Russian-Ukrainian war has highlighted the vulnerability of Eastern and Central European countries to external threats, including hybrid attacks, cyber warfare, energy blackmail and information influence, so the increased tension in the region calls for a review of defence strategies, a strengthening of NATO's role and a strengthening of collective security. Thirdly, the war has significantly affected the European and global order, causing widespread changes in energy policy, economic ties and political unity among European countries. In particular, issues such as energy independence from Russia, the modernisation of the army, increased sanctions pressure and support for countries affected by aggression have increased in importance. Research on this topic is also important for understanding the prospects for lasting peace and stability in the region and for developing new approaches to conflict resolution and preventing future threats, since, as Vasyl Shynkaruk and Natalia Shynkaruk argue, the continuing threat of Russian aggression and the awareness of the lack of credible external security guarantees are the main rationales for supporting Ukraine's strategic course towards Euro-Atlantic integration.¹

The timeliness of the ongoing research stems from the need to create a more effective system of international relations that takes into account contemporary realities and promotes the protection of the interests of the countries of the region. Therefore, the study of this topic is not only of theoretical, but also of practical importance, as it contributes to a better understanding of global processes and the development of strategies to ensure peace and security in Europe.

¹ V. Shynkaruk, N. Shynkaruk, *Vstup Ukrainy do NATO – zabezpechennia natsionalnoi bezpeky, Vidnosyny mizh Ukrainoiu i NATO na suchasnomu etapi: dosiahnennia ta vyklyky: zb. nauk. prats (za materialamy Mizhnarodnoi naukovopraktychnoi konferentsii, Kyiv, 2 chervnia 2022 r.)*, 2022, pp. 12–13.

Security issues have always been at the centre of international relations theory and practice. Recently, the issue of security in international relations in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war has become the subject of inquiry for many scholars and analysts. Aspects of security in Eastern and Central Europe have been analysed by Polish researchers and think tanks. In particular, Aleksander Olech and Jacek Raubo have carried out an analysis on the need for close military cooperation between the countries of the Trilateral Initiative, as at present the Trilateral Initiative is primarily economic and political in nature, but with the increase in international tension, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it is necessary to expand this format to include a defence dimension.² Piotr Wojcik argues that when making joint investments in infrastructure, it is worth using EU tools focused on the development of cross-border cooperation (Ukraine and the Tri-Portuguese countries), such as the EU Strategy for the Danube Region (EUSDR), as they can be a valuable source of funding for such projects, in view of the difficulties in obtaining funds from other sources for the implementation of the Tri-Portuguese projects.³ Zbigniew Brzezinski emphasises the importance of Ukraine in ensuring security in the EU and even in the world, and expresses the opinion that in the event of close cooperation in the Weimar Triangle format (Germany, France and Poland), extended by the accession of Ukraine, an axis of states could emerge which, on the one hand, would be the foundation of security and, on the other hand, pose no threat either to Russia or to any other actors on the international stage.⁴

Many Ukrainian academics are actively researching the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe. Thus, Ruslan Demchyshak predicts that in the context of the decisions of the last NATO summit, Ukraine's security cooperation with the sub-regional organisations of Central and Eastern Europe will develop at the current pace, periodically gaining new intensity.⁵

² A. Olech, J. Raubo, *Czas na Armię Trójmorza? O konieczności bliskiej współpracy wojskowej państw trójmorskich*, Instytut Nowej Europy, <https://ine.org.pl/czas-na-armie-trojmorza-o-koniecznosc-bliksiej-wspolpracy-wojskowej-panstw-trojmerskich/>, (accessed 30.01.2025).

³ P. Wójcik, *Zacieśnianie relacji Ukrainy z Trójmorzem poprzez dotychczasowe formaty współpracy wielostronnej w EŚW. Wnioski i rekomendacje*, Instytut BiRM, <https://instytutbirm.pl/zaciesnianie-relacji-ukrainy-z-trojmorzem/>, (accessed 30.01.2025).

⁴ Z. Brzeziński, *Wielka Szachownica. Geostrategia amerykańskiego przywództwa*, Pałac Dożów, Kraków 2024.

⁵ R. Demchyshak, *Bezpekovi aspekt spivpratsi Ukrainy iz subrehionalnymi ob'iednanniamy Tsentralno-Skhidnoi Yevropy*, "Rehionalni studii" 2023, no. 34, pp. 123–128.

The transition of this cooperation to a new level is only possible in the event of Ukraine's accession to the Alliance or the emergence of new viable security alliances with the countries of the region, which could potentially be formed as a result of the post-war transformation of the international system. Ihor Todorov examines the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian aggression against Ukraine and describes the features of the contemporary aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, stressing that there is no evidence that the Russian authorities are considering revising their approaches to relations with the outside world.⁶ Nataliia Nechaieva-Yuriichuk analyses the security dimensions of geopolitical initiatives in the Central and Eastern European region, arguing that the consolidation of the West (including Ukraine and all Eastern and Central European countries as an integral part of it) is capable of containing Russian aggression and punishing it for systemic violations of international law.⁷

However, there is still a lack of research dedicated to analysing the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war. There is a need to complete the analysis taking into account the principles of international relations theory regarding the main factors and systemic tools of destabilisation of Ukrainian-Russian relations in the security sphere, methodological approaches to the study of the security dimension in interstate relations under the conditions of foreign policy transformation of the countries of the world, and to accurately show the Russian factor in the reinterpretation of the defence capabilities of Eastern and Central European countries.

Findings and discussion

The Central and Eastern European region is in need of enhanced solidarity as it finds itself at the epicentre of contemporary geopolitical challenges that require increased strategic resilience. The geographic location of the region makes it crucial in matters of defence and countering hybrid threats. Russian military aggression, cyber attacks, economic pressure and disinformation campaigns pose

⁶ I. Todorov, *Bezpekovi vymir mizhnarodnykh vidnosyn v Skhidnii ta Tsentralnii Yevropi v konteksti rosiiskoi ahresii*, "Politychne zhyttia" 2022, no. 1, pp. 138–144.

⁷ N. Nechaieva-Yuriichuk, *Bezpekovi vymiry heopolitychnykh initsiatyv u rehioni Tsentralno-Skhidnoi Yevropy*, "Mediaforum: analytika, prohnozy" 2022, vol. 9, pp. 141–161.

serious challenges to national institutions and international cooperation. In order to increase their resilience, states in the region should actively develop joint defence initiatives and invest in technologies that enhance self-defence capabilities. Craig Snyder argues that states form temporary alliances when they seek relative advantages – economic, political or military.⁸ A key condition for the stability of Central and Eastern Europe is solidarity between states. An important tool for this is cooperation within the framework of NATO, the European Union and regional initiatives such as the Visegrad Group or the Trilateral Initiative. Only through joint efforts can the challenges posed by external threats and internal crises be effectively countered. Deepening political, economic and cultural dialogue will contribute to strengthening unity and trust among the countries of the region, which in turn will become the basis for their sustainable development and security in a changing global environment.

The security of international relations in Central and Eastern Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war is defined by significant changes in the regional and global security architecture. The war has created new challenges for NATO and the EU, forcing states to strengthen defence capabilities and increase defence spending. Russia's aggression has led to an intensification of support for Ukraine from the international community, including arms supplies, financial assistance and sanctions against Russia. At a meeting of defence ministers from five countries – Germany, the UK, France, Poland and Italy – held in Warsaw on 13 January 2025, Poland's defence minister, Wladyslaw Kosiniak-Kamysz, stressed that Ukraine badly needs the support of its allies, as it is fighting not only for its freedom, but also for security in Europe, so aid must continue.⁹ These words point to the importance of international cooperation and solidarity in the face of the threat posed by Russian aggression and the need to further mobilise resources and strengthen defence and security cooperation in the region. Joint action by allied countries is crucial for the stability and security of not only Ukraine, but all of Europe.

Central European countries such as Poland and the Baltic States have become important partners in strengthening regional security, advocating a tough policy

⁸ C. Snyder (ed.), *Contemporary Security and Strategy*, Macmillan, Basingstoke 1997, pp. 102–119.

⁹ V. Kosiniaka-Kamysha, *U Varshavi vidbulas zustrich ministriv oborony p'iaty krain: ishlusia pro dopomohu Ukraini ta oboronnyi potentsial Yevropy*, Radio Svoboda, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-varshava-ministry-zustrich-yevropa-bezpeka-viyna/33274457.html>, (accessed 30.01.2025).

to contain Russia and playing an important role in securing Central and Eastern Europe. Their geographical location on the border between the European Union and NATO on the one hand, and Russia on the other, makes them key players in deterring potential threats. Poland is actively investing in the modernisation of its armed forces, increasing defence spending and is one of the few NATO countries to achieve the recommended 2% of GDP for the defence sector. The Baltic States are also actively cooperating with their NATO allies, particularly through participation in the Enhanced Forward Presence programme, deploying international battalions to strengthen collective defence. In addition to the military aspect, these states are making a significant contribution to countering hybrid threats. Poland is a key hub for gas supplies thanks to the Baltic Pipe project, which contributes to reducing dependence on Russian energy resources. The Baltic States are actively implementing cyber security strategies to protect their information systems. Together, these states form an effective bloc within the EU and NATO, ensuring not only the security of their borders, but also the stability of the entire region.

NATO and the EU are playing a key role in ensuring security in Central and Eastern Europe in the face of the Russian-Ukrainian war. NATO is strengthening collective defence by deploying additional troops in border countries and the EU is providing significant political, economic and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine by introducing new sanctions against Russia. The coordinated actions of these structures contribute to stability, strengthen the defence capabilities of the countries in the region and deter the aggressor. According to Oleh Cebenko and Marta Senkalskaya, the alliance is interested in creating a safe and stable environment in the region that fosters the development of democratic institutions and good-neighbourly relations with countries on NATO's eastern flank. Strengthening the alliance's presence in the region is an essential factor in guaranteeing security for some countries in the region, the stability of the EU and NATO member states.¹⁰ NATO members provide almost €40 billion worth of military support to Ukraine every year. Nato Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg at the Bucharest Nine summit in Riga, also attended by Finland and Sweden, stressed that we must maintain this level of support for as long as necessary to ensure fresh funding every year. Stable, long-term support sends a signal to President Putin that he will not be able to wait us out.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ *Heneralnyi sekretar NATO v Ryzi*, Orhanizatsiia Pivnichnoatlantychnoho dohovoru, https://www.nato.int/cps/uk/natohq/news_196378.htm?selectedLocale=uk, (accessed 30.01.2025).

The Russian-Ukrainian war has caused radical changes in the foreign policy of many countries, including Germany, Poland, the Baltic States and others. As Vasyl Krotiuk notes, modern warfare is a complex phenomenon that has taken a variety of forms in the global and local processes of power competition of modern times.¹² The proliferation of hybrid methods of warfare, the migration crisis, economic instability and the increased threat of nuclear conflict are direct consequences of this conflict. It is critically important for all Central and Eastern European countries to be able to secure themselves against hostile external influences and to be able to guarantee sustainable development. The main threat is the aggressive policy of Russia, which has not only violated the territorial integrity of Ukraine, but also undermined the stability of the entire region. Hostilities, hybrid aggression, including cyber-attacks and disinformation campaigns, pose a risk to countries neighbouring the conflict zone, such as Poland, Romania, the Baltic States and others. According to Mariana Bihus and Oleksandr Vosia, Russian cyber-attacks on Eastern Europe and NATO are one of the most serious threats to regional stability and security. These attacks have a wide range of targets and methods, including the use of malware and various ransomware programs, as well as other forms of cyber aggression.¹³ This forces countries to strengthen cooperation within NATO and the EU. The second key threat is the destabilisation caused by the economic and humanitarian impact of the war. Millions of Ukrainian refugees have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, putting strain on social systems and infrastructure. At the same time, the influence of pro-Russian forces seeking to destabilise the region through political and social conflict is increasing. In the face of these challenges, the importance of international coordination and solidarity is growing. The war has also accelerated the processes of Ukraine's integration into European structures, including the EU and NATO, which creates new opportunities for strengthening regional security. Nevertheless, addressing these challenges requires long-term strategic support, including financial, political and military support, from international partners.

¹² V. Krotiuk (ed.), *Svitohliadnyi sens suchasnoi viiny: sotsiohumanitarni aspekty*, Kharkiv 2024.

¹³ M. Bihus, O. Vos, *Kiberbezpeka ta informatsiina viina: analiz suchasnykh zahroz ta initsiatyv na skhidnomu flanzi YeS ta NATO*, in: M. Malskyi, L. Leshchenko, O. Kuchyk, R. Vovk, N. Struchok (eds.), *Ukraine and Transformation of International Security System. Ukrainian Formula of Peace for New World Order. Proceedings of the international scientific conference* (Lviv, May 16–17, 2024), Faculty of International Relations of the Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv 2024, pp. 14–20.

The Russian-Ukrainian war has significantly exacerbated the geopolitical situation in Eastern and Central Europe (Table 1). It has become a catalyst for new regional and global security challenges, strengthening alliances and revising strategic priorities for ensuring the security of Eastern and Central European countries in the context of Russian threats, namely: strengthening the region's defence capabilities, support for Ukraine (strengthening sanctions against Russia), energy security (development of alternative energy sources), cyber security and information protection, collective security and cooperation, strengthening the protection of the EU's eastern borders, economic stability and sustainable social development.

Table 1. Geopolitical situation in Eastern and Central Europe in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war

Country	Attitude towards war	Military support for Ukraine	Economic support for Ukraine	Attitude towards the Russian Federation	Geopolitical role
Ukraine	Defends itself against Russian aggression	Main parties to the conflict	High level of commitment from allies	Negative, Russia is perceived as an aggressor	Centre of conflict, key partner for the West
Poland	Strongly supports Ukraine	Supply of arms, training	High level of financial and humanitarian assistance	Negative, threat to national security	NATO outpost in the region, active diplomacy
Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia	Expresses unequivocal support for Ukraine	Supply of arms, technical assistance	Significant economic support	Very negative, historical threats from the Russian Federation	Strengthening NATO's eastern flank
Germany	Initially cautious, now more active support	Supply of tanks, air defence, ammunition	Significant economic assistance	Negative, attempts to reduce dependence on Russian energy resources	Leader in the EU, key economic partner
France	Support for Ukraine	Supply of arms, technical assistance	Economic aid, political support	Negative, but maintains communication channels	Influential player in the EU and NATO
Hungary	Ambiguous position, calls for negotiations	Minimum military support	Limited economic support	Moderately neutral, dependence on Russian gas	Problematic partner in the EU

Country	Attitude towards war	Military support for Ukraine	Economic support for Ukraine	Attitude towards the Russian Federation	Geopolitical role
Czech Republic and Slovakia	Support for Ukraine	Supply of military equipment	Substantial economic assistance	Negative, Russia is perceived as an aggressor	Active position in the region, strengthening NATO
Belarus	Russian Federation ally, use of territory for aggression	None	Resource support to the Russian Federation	Positive, dependence on Russian Federation	Threat to regional stability
Romania	Support for Ukraine Military equipment	Supply of military equipment, strengthening of air defence	Humanitarian assistance	Negative, security threat due to proximity to conflict zone	Important NATO partner on the Black Sea
Moldova	Vulnerable to pressure from the Russian Federation, support for Ukraine	Limited	Reception of refugees, humanitarian aid	Negative, concerns about Transnistria	Threatened by escalation due to regional conflicts

Source: compiled by the authors.

Experts from the Royal Institute of International Affairs Chatham House presented a study in 2023 entitled “Seven ways in which Russia’s war with Ukraine has changed the world,” in which they highlighted the profound geopolitical, economic and social changes caused by Russia’s war with Ukraine¹⁴. The Russian-Ukrainian war has become a key factor of destabilisation in Central and Eastern Europe, leading to a rethinking of the security priorities of both individual states and the region as a whole (Table 2). Russia’s invasion of Ukraine violated fundamental principles of international law, including the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states, increasing the risk to neighbouring countries. In response, many countries in the region have stepped up efforts to strengthen their defence capabilities, increased cooperation within NATO and the EU, and requested additional military support from the United States. In addition, the war has catalysed the formation of new alliances and increased regional cooperation, e.g. through formats such as the Bucharest Nine or the Trilateral initiatives. Kenneth Waltz argues that the formation of alliances enables a more even distribution

¹⁴ S. Coles, L. Rellstab, *Seven ways Russia’s war on Ukraine has changed the world*, Chatham House, <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2023/02/seven-ways-russias-war-ukraine-has-changed-world>, (accessed 30.01.2025).

of power in the international system, which discourages other states from changing the status quo.¹⁵

At the same time, the Russian-Ukrainian war has created serious humanitarian and economic challenges, which has further affected the security of the region and highlighted the importance of information security as an element of international relations. Countering propaganda, disinformation and cyber attacks has become an important aspect of the fight against hybrid threats. The Russian-Ukrainian war has exposed weaknesses in the functioning of international organisations, such as the UN, which need reform to effectively resolve conflicts and prevent future aggressions. All this underlines the importance of strengthening European solidarity and consolidating efforts to counter common threats, while developing long-term strategies to strengthen stability and security in the region.

Table 2. Security Priorities in Eastern and Central Europe in the Context of the Russian-Ukrainian War

Category	Description	Examples/Facts	Consequences
Military security	Threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states in the region	Russian invasion of Ukraine; strengthening of NATO in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia	Escalation of conflict; increased defence spending
Energy security	Use of energy resources as a tool of pressure	Discontinuation of gas supplies to the EU from Russia	Transition to alternative energy sources, strengthening of EU energy independence
Economic security	Impact of sanctions, economic pressure and trade restrictions on the region	EU sanctions against Russia; decline in trade between Russia and CEE countries	Reduction of economic dependence on Russia; adaptation of economies to new conditions
Humanitarian aspects	Crisis caused by mass migrations, human rights violations and war crimes	Refugees from Ukraine to Poland, Slovakia, Hungary	Humanitarian aid; strain on social security systems in host countries
The role of international organizations	Influence of NATO, EU, UN and OSCE on the stabilisation of the region	Deployment of NATO missions; EU financial and military assistance to Ukraine	Strengthening the role of international organisations in maintaining peace and security
Regional alliances and cooperation	Deepening cooperation between Central and Eastern European countries for common security	'Lublin Triangle' (Ukraine, Poland, Lithuania); Trilateral initiative	Creating new formats for regional cooperation to counter threats

¹⁵ K. Waltz, *Theory of international politics*, Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., Reading 1979.

Category	Description	Examples/Facts	Consequences
International legal aspects	Violation of international law norms and sovereignty principles	Annexation of Crimea; continued shelling of civilian facilities in Ukraine	Recourse to international courts; introduction of legal sanctions against Russia
Information security	Spread of propaganda, disinformation and cyber attacks	Russian propaganda media; hacking of regional government websites	Developing strategies to counter disinformation; enhancing cyber security

Source: compiled by the authors.

Ihor Todorov notes that strategic communication mechanisms are of key importance in the context of the aggressive policy of the Russian Federation, providing activities aimed at building public support for the democratic system, the principles of the rule of law, the rule of law, the protection of human rights, public transparency and long-term democratic orientation in foreign policy.¹⁶ Strategic communication mechanisms in the context of the security aspects of international relations in Central and Eastern Europe are gaining importance in view of the challenges posed by the Russian-Ukrainian war. In this region, strategic communication serves to consolidate allied positions, counter disinformation and build trust between NATO and EU member states. The active participation of international organisations and key states contributes to the formation of a unified policy towards Russia's aggressive actions, including sanctions and support for Ukraine. Information campaigns are also a tool for strengthening public support for the policy of containment and assistance to Ukraine. A feature of strategic communication in this context is the need to take into account the asymmetric nature of threats. Russia is actively using the tools of hybrid warfare, including propaganda, cyber attacks and manipulation of public opinion in neighbouring states. The response of Central and Eastern European states is through proactive measures, including the establishment of centres to counter disinformation and promote facts at the international level. Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, for example, are examples of effective public mobilisation to counter Russian information aggression. A key element of these mechanisms is the emphasis on partnerships with civil society and the media. Government agencies work with independent media, think tanks and NGOs to increase transparency and raise public awareness of security threats. Such activities contribute to shaping a stable information environment that is resilient to external influences. As a result, strategic communication in Central and Eastern Europe not only ensures a coordinated response

¹⁶ I. Todorov, *Bezpekovi vybir...*, op. cit., pp. 138–144.

to aggression, but also shapes a new security culture in the region. Since the beginning of Russia's widespread aggression against Ukraine, the West has shown an unprecedented level of unity, recognising the need for joint efforts to protect the international order. Ukraine and Eastern and Central Europe have become important elements in this process, as they are on the front line of the fight against Russia's expansion. The European Union, NATO and partner countries have joined forces to implement sanctions and to provide arms and humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. These actions have become evidence of the West's willingness to fight not only for the sovereignty of individual states, but also for the preservation of the basic principles of international law.

Central and Eastern European countries, with their own historical experience of Soviet occupation, play a central role in this consolidation and are the most strongly supportive of Ukraine. Poland, the Baltic states, the Czech Republic and others are actively lobbying for tough sanctions against Russia, providing military and political support to Ukraine, showing that solidarity can be an effective response to aggression. The region has become not only the boundary between freedom and dictatorship, but also a catalyst for changes in Western Europe's approach to security and shared responsibility. Therefore, the West's determination to punish Russia for violations of international law and war crimes is an essential condition for maintaining global stability. Concerted efforts to gather evidence, implement sanctions and prepare international tribunals demonstrate the will to restore justice and prevent similar crises in the future. The consolidation of the West is becoming not only a response to aggression, but also a guarantee for the formation of a new security architecture, recognising the integration of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as its intrinsic element.

Summary

The purpose of the article was achieved through an analysis of international law to conclude that the Russian-Ukrainian war has significantly exacerbated the security aspects of international relations in Eastern and Central Europe, revealing weaknesses in the existing system of international law and collective security. Russia's act of aggression violates fundamental principles of the UN Charter, including the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs, sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. The response of the international community, including the imposition of sanctions, military and humanitarian assistance

to Ukraine, demonstrates the importance of NATO, the EU and the OSCE in stabilising the region, although it also reveals their dependence on the consensus of their members. The war has highlighted the need to reform international security mechanisms to ensure a more effective response to hybrid threats, including cyber attacks and information warfare. Ukraine's pivotal role in shaping Europe's new security architecture requires a review of existing legal instruments, with a particular focus on deterring the aggressor and ensuring long-term peace. The Russian-Ukrainian war has become a decisive challenge to the regional security of Central and Eastern Europe and has demonstrated the vulnerability of the countries of the region to the aggressive policies of Russia, which is seeking to re-establish its influence in the post-Soviet area. The war has also exacerbated the issue of territorial integrity, which has become a key issue for Ukraine and a potential threat to other countries in the region. It has also increased polarisation among European states, forcing countries to reconsider their security strategies. At the same time, the war has revealed the need for further integration and improvement of the EU's common foreign and security policy. In addition to traditional military threats, the war in Ukraine has drawn attention to hybrid methods. The energy dependence of some countries in the region on Russian gas proved to be a major challenge, stimulating an active search for alternative energy sources and diversification of supply. This aspect has become a key element of the region's long-term security strategy.

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Summary

The research findings indicate that Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has dismantled traditional approaches to European security, intensifying concerns about the effectiveness of international security mechanisms such as NATO, the OSCE and the UN. The war has also triggered profound transformations in the foreign policies of regional countries, particularly in strengthening military cooperation, enhancing defence capabilities and reassessing energy security. The Central and Eastern European region requires greater solidarity as it has found itself at the epicentre of contemporary geopolitical challenges that demand increased strategic resilience. The region’s geographical position

makes it crucial for defence matters and countering hybrid threats. The authors conclude that Ukraine plays a central role in shaping the security order of Eastern and Central Europe, as its ability to effectively resist Russian aggression has become a decisive factor in deterring Russia and protecting democratic values in the region. Moreover, international support for Ukraine – including military, economic and diplomatic assistance – is vital for maintaining regional stability and security in Eastern and Central Europe.

Oryginalna praca badawcza

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**ENERGY SECURITY OF POLAND IN THE FACE OF
DOMESTIC AND GLOBAL THREATS: CURRENT SITUATION,
CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PROSPECTS IN THE CONTEXT
OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR**

**BEZPIECZEŃSTWO ENERGETYCZNE POLSKI W OBLICZU
ZAGROŻEŃ KRAJOWYCH I GLOBALNYCH: OBECNA
SYTUACJA, WYZWANIA ORAZ PERSPEKTYWY NA
PRZYSZŁOŚĆ W KONTEKŚCIE WOJNY ROSYJSKO-
-UKRAIŃSKIEJ**

Abstract: Energy security is a key element in the stability of states, and its importance has become particularly apparent in the context of the crisis caused by the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. This article examines the challenges facing Poland in ensuring stable and secure energy supplies, particularly natural gas, in the face of the changing geopolitical situation. It also analyses energy transition processes, including the shift from hydrocarbons to renewable energy sources (RES), which are part of Poland's and the European Union's commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The article also outlines the impact of key international players, such as the European Union, the US and Russia, on the Polish energy sector. The aim is to understand how these policies affect the country's energy security and what challenges are posed by the decarbonisation of the energy sector. The study, based on case study, forecasting and comparison methods, shows that a full consideration of all factors influencing the energy market is necessary to ensure Poland's energy security. The

Russian-Ukrainian war has significantly affected Poland's energy security, forcing the urgent need to diversify energy sources, become independent of energy resources from Russia and accelerate the transition to renewable energy sources. Adequate literature on the subject from specialised journals of recognised Polish and foreign authors was used to conduct the study.

Zarys treści: Bezpieczeństwo energetyczne jest kluczowym elementem stabilności państw, a znaczenie tego bezpieczeństwa stało się szczególnie widoczne w kontekście kryzysu wywołanego konfliktem rosyjsko-ukraińskim. Niniejszy artykuł bada wyzwania stojące przed Polską – wyzwania w zakresie zapewnienia stabilnych i bezpiecznych dostaw energii, szczególnie gazu ziemnego, w obliczu zmieniającej się sytuacji geopolitycznej. Analizowane są również procesy transformacji energetycznej, w tym przejście od węglowodorów do odnawialnych źródeł energii (OZE). Procesy te są częścią zobowiązań Polski i Unii Europejskiej związanych z obniżeniem emisji gazów cieplarnianych. W artykule przedstawiono również wpływ kluczowych graczy międzynarodowych, takich jak Unia Europejska, USA czy Rosja, na polski sektor energetyczny. Celem jest zrozumienie, w jaki sposób polityki te wpływają na bezpieczeństwo energetyczne kraju oraz jakie wyzwania wiążą się z dekarbonizacją sektora energetycznego. Badanie porównawcze, oparte na metodach analizy przypadków, prognozowania oraz porównań, pokazuje, że pełne uwzględnienie wszystkich czynników wpływających na rynek energetyczny jest niezbędne, aby zapewnić bezpieczeństwo energetyczne Polski. Wojna rosyjsko-ukraińska znacząco wpłynęła na bezpieczeństwo energetyczne Polski i wykreowała pilną potrzebę dywersyfikacji źródeł energii, uniezależnienia się od surowców energetycznych z Rosji oraz przyspieszenia przejścia na odnawialne źródła energii. Do przeprowadzenia badań wykorzystano adekwatną literaturę przedmiotu pochodzącą z wyspecjalizowanych czasopism i stworzoną przez uznanych autorów polskich i zagranicznych.

Keywords: energy security, energy transition, Russian-Ukrainian conflict, energy challenges.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo energetyczne, zmiany energetyczne, konflikt rosyjsko-ukraiński, wyzwania energetyczne.

Introduction

Throughout almost the entire 20th century and the first decades of the 21st century, energy security was one of the main strategic objectives of states. Decision-makers in charge of energy policy used both domestic raw material resources and energy generation technologies to ensure state sovereignty. Lack of access to or acquisition of stable sources of raw materials led to problems with the functioning of state infrastructure, weakening their position internationally and domestically. Throughout the history of the 20th and beginning of the 21st centuries, there have been instances where states have used energy resources as a political tool to obtain concessions from weaker countries. An example is the policy of the Arab states after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, when, following the defeat of Egypt and Syria, the Arab states imposed an embargo on oil supplies to Western countries, which triggered an oil crisis. In the face of today's challenges, the Polish authorities need to develop and implement an energy security policy. For many years, Poland was dependent on a single supplier of oil and natural gas, which posed a threat to the stability of its economy. In addition, the country has become dependent on imported hard coal, mainly due to a lack of investment in the coal sector and rising production costs. The decarbonisation process, aimed at protecting the environment from the effects of climate change, is also an important factor in this context. Energy raw materials, such as gas and oil, were supplied to Poland as early as the 1970s from the USSR and after 1989 from the Russian Federation. Poland, lacking sufficient energy raw material resources, was not able to achieve full self-sufficiency. Although in the 1960s more than half of the gas for consumption came from domestic deposits, this figure has now fallen to 25%, and forecasts indicate that production is unlikely to increase significantly, despite political announcements. Poland's energy security also includes an effectively functioning heat and power infrastructure. For many years this was based mainly on hard coal and lignite. Over time, new developments have emerged, allowing the production of energy from renewable energy sources (RES) and from gas, which has become a raw material used for heat, electricity and also as a vehicle fuel. However, the transformation of the energy sector has not yet progressed enough to significantly reduce the share of hydrocarbons in energy production. Although the commitments made by many countries in this regard are becoming more

and more realistic, they still remain a challenge that will have to be met in the near future, compared to the situation in the 1990s.¹

The current state of research in security sciences and energy security

The goal of any authority, at all levels and in almost every institution, is to provide security to a degree that meets public expectations. These expectations are both objective and subjective in nature. In the case of the objective aspect, authorities and institutions can more easily identify problems and take corrective action using the tools and mechanisms available. In the subjective context, on the other hand, it becomes crucial to manage image, to present phenomena and events appropriately and to work on changing public perception and awareness over the long term. Such tasks can sometimes be more difficult, as they often conflict with local traditions and conditions that may go beyond existing legal norms. In some developed countries, there are still places where customary law, elements of feudalism or local traditions are more important than legal norms and generally accepted rules of conduct, which are obvious to elites but not necessarily to people from further afield. Despite the passage of time, the development of technology and changes in consciousness, society, identity and civilisation, the two foundations – state and authority – are still an important element in the creation of new definitions and models of security.² In an era in which respect for human rights and the protection of the environment are becoming priorities for many states, security theorists increasingly refer to the theory that the most important element of security is the pursuit of individual, societal or state survival at the expense of others. This theory was first formulated by T. Hobbes, who expressed it with the famous statement: ‘man is a wolf to man’, which is still relevant today. Expanding on this thought, it is worth pointing out that, both in the past and in the present, there is a constant struggle to ensure survival, which takes various forms. Often it is a competition regulated by legal and moral norms, but there is also no shortage of violent conflicts for survival in which rules are broken or do not exist at all. In ancient Rome, the word ‘*securitas*’ was the equivalent of the modern concept of security. It was derived from the expression ‘*sine*

¹ *Paliwo przyszłości*, CIRE.pl, <https://www.cire.pl/artykuly/materialy-problemowe/183793-paliwo-przyszlosci>, (accessed 4.02.2025).

² N. Machiavelli, *Książę. Rozważania nad pierwszym dziesięcioksięgiem historii Rzymu Liwiusza*, Unia Wydawnicza „Verum”, Warszawa 2008, p. 23.

cura', which meant 'without care.' 'Custody', on the other hand, was associated with terms such as care, control and supervision. When talking about the care of someone or something, it meant exercising control over them. Cicero, a well-known speaker and philosopher, played an important role in the consideration of war and peace. He addressed the nature of peace and the atrocities associated with war, advocating peaceful solutions based on compromise and consensus. At the time, security was linked to the dilemmas of war and peace, and in the Middle Ages mystical and religious elements were added to these considerations. The ethos of the knight – the defender of virtue – also emerged. Learned monks, when writing about war, often referred to the fourth commandment of the Ten Commandments – 'thou shalt not kill.' Niccolò Machiavelli argued that each individual possessed the energy and will to act, which could only be harnessed in a state that upheld the social order and had the means to ensure individual and societal happiness, freedom and security. He emphasised the importance of the economy, legislation and fair and balanced internal relations in the state. Thomas Morus and Thomas Campanella, on the other hand, focused on the problem of property, which they considered to be a source of armed conflict. They proposed a solution to this problem through the state, which, except in exceptional situations, should be the possessor of property to the fullest extent possible. The 1990s represented a breakthrough in the understanding of security issues, especially after the end of the Cold War. During this period, a number of new theories and analyses emerged from a broad scientific approach. The Copenhagen Peace Research Institute expanded the definition of security, linked to the end of totalitarian rule in many countries and their transition to democratic or authoritarian systems. In response to these developments, the focus began to shift more towards the individual and society, taking into account the subjective dimension of security. The concept of societal security was introduced. Copenhagen researchers pointed out that security issues cannot be analysed solely at the level of the individual, but must first be considered in the context of social subsystems.³ According to Roman Kuźniar, a Polish international relations theorist and government advisor, security is a basic existential need of both individuals and social groups, as well as of states.⁴ Security can be classified according to its specific nature, which helps to answer the question of what security actually is. It also defines the areas of interest for both researchers and policy-makers who implement

³ A. Gdula, *Wybrane historyczne i współczesne koncepcje bezpieczeństwa*, "Doctrina. Studia Społeczno-polityczne" 2011, vol. 8, no. 8, pp. 65–66.

⁴ R. Kuźniar, *Po pierwsze bezpieczeństwo*, "Rzeczpospolita", 9.01.1996.

the theories in practice. The scope of these areas is broad and may expand further over time, as in the case of strategic culture, which encompasses a broader context than security, but has its roots in the latter. No one would have guessed that the research would address the strategic culture of organisations like ISIS or al-Qaeda, and in the future may also include the activities of multinational corporations, which would require adapting the tools and indicators used to analyse the strategic culture of states.⁵

In the 18th century, natural gas began to be used for street lighting in large cities. In contrast, the massive use of oil in the 20th century revolutionised the energy transition, replacing coal with a more efficient resource. In the early 20th century, coal-powered cars set speed records, but a few years later, engines powered by oil and petrol became the basis for the development of the modern economy. Countries with access to energy resources developed much faster and had a stronger position on the international stage than those that had to rely on imports. Despite technological advances that may affect these principles, this situation is not expected to change dramatically by the end of the third decade of the 21st century. Consequently, energy security, still largely based on hydrocarbons, is an important part of the strategic culture not only of states, but also of transnational corporations whose budgets exceed those of many medium-sized European states.⁶ Energy security belongs to the category of public goods, which are characterised by the fact that they serve the whole of society or a particular local community. The consumption of such goods is egalitarian and the use of these goods by one person does not restrict access to them by others. The benefits of such goods are shared and indivisible. The responsibility for ensuring energy security lies with the state authorities, which can use various mechanisms and tools. These authorities may also delegate some responsibilities to the private sector, but this does not relieve the state of its responsibility

⁵ C. Drozd, *Kultura strategiczna – geneza, definicja i praktyczne zastosowanie*, “Roczniki Studenckie Akademii Wojsk Lądowych” 2017, no. 1; A. I. Johnston, *Thinking about Strategic Culture*, “International Security” 1995, no. 4, pp. 36–43; J. Glenn, *Realism versus Strategic Culture: Competition and Collaboration*, “International Studies Review” 2009, vol. 11, no. 3, pp. 530–531.

⁶ See J. de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy – 1650 to the Present*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2008, pp. 40–90; C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780–1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*, Blackwell Publishing, Malden 2004, pp. 23–59; R. C. Alen, *The British Industrial Revolution in Global Perspective*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2019, pp. 340.

for the proper functioning of the energy sector.⁷ To define energy security, it is useful to refer to legal acts. According to the Energy Law, ‘energy security’ is such a state of the economy that ensures that the future demand of consumers for fuels and energy is met in a manner that is both technically and economically justified.⁸

Poland’s energy resources

Poland belongs to the group of countries representing the Old Continent that lack strategic energy resources. Excluding the United Kingdom, which until recently was self-sufficient in oil and gas production, there is currently no country in the EU that is able to cover its own needs in terms of the necessity to use hydrocarbons. It is no different for the Polish energy sector. The exception in this regard is the depleting deposits of hard coal, which as an energy resource is slowly being replaced by RES, nuclear energy and, as part of the transition period declared by the EU necessary for the full modernisation of the energy sector, by gas. Poland has small deposits of natural gas and oil, which is not being exploited, but only the discovery of the deposit on geodetic maps. This is due to the geological location of the deposits and the cost-effectiveness of production. The situation is much better on the previously mentioned hard coal market, although in this case too, in recent years, serious problems have arisen related to the difficulties of exploiting deep deposits and, consequently, the costs of extraction, which are too high in relation to the price on world markets.

Poland’s natural gas and oil sector comprises an extensive and cyclically upgraded transmission infrastructure. Two key gas pipelines and one oil transport pipeline run through the territory of Poland, which until now made our country an important transit hub for Russian energy resources. However, as a result of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, operations on the Yamal gas pipeline have been suspended and on the Druzhba gas pipeline have been significantly reduced. Oil supplies are currently being delivered by tanker as a result of the sanctions imposed by the European Union on Russia. Work is also underway to introduce a price cap on Russian oil, which would apply to EU and G7 countries. In this

⁷ J. Braun, *Bezpieczeństwo energetyczne jako dobro publiczne. Miary i czynniki wpływające na jego poziom*, “Studia Ekonomiczne. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego w Katowicach” 2018, no. 358, p. 14.

⁸ W. Bojarski, *Bezpieczeństwo energetyczne*, “Wokół Energetyki” 2004, vol. 7, no. 3.

context, it can be said with a high degree of probability that Poland is ceasing to act as a transit state for oil and gas. This is a conscious political decision, taken even before the outbreak of the armed conflict in Ukraine. Decisions concerning the diversification of supply sources were taken relatively recently, but it is worth noting that they have been implemented by all previous governments, which have tried to implement the goals contained in the energy strategy developed back in the 1990s. Thanks to the steps taken, the Polish energy sector gained a terminal for receiving LNG, which significantly increased our independence from Russian supplies. As a result of the modernisation works carried out and the expansion of the gas terminal, the capacity to obtain gas has increased to 6.8 bcm per year. A further capacity increase of 0.7 bcm is planned for the future. In addition, there are plans to build a new gas port on the Baltic Sea and to lease or purchase a floating terminal with a capacity of 2.5 bcm to 3.5 bcm of gas per year. Since the 1970s, an oil transmission infrastructure has been developing, initially built back in the communist era. This makes it possible to obtain oil by sea via the Baltic Sea. Poland also has an extensive network of refineries, including two of the largest in Płock and Gdańsk. Their capacity, once domestic demand has been met, allows the export of surplus crude oil and petroleum products. Over the past three decades, both oil terminals and refining plants have been modernised several times. The oil processing base has been significantly expanded and the fuel distribution network has been extended to cover not only the domestic market, but also the foreign market, especially in Central and Eastern Europe.⁹ From the perspective of rationalising processes in the energy sector, it will be crucial to include natural gas deposits in land-use planning, which will enable their exploitation in the future, if not immediately. This belief stems from the progressive improvement in gas extraction technology, making previously unprofitable deposits profitable. Unfortunately, the implementation of these plans will mean that gas production in Poland will not significantly exceed 4.5 bcm per year in 2030. Due to the limited availability of deposits, the country is unable to achieve a higher output, and forecasts do not predict a change in this trend in the near future.¹⁰

⁹ W. Stelmach, *Gazociąg Baltic Pipe osiągnął pełną przepustowość*, RMF24, <https://www.rmfm24.pl/fakty/polska/news-gazociag-baltic-pipe-osiagnal-pelna-przepustowosc,-nId,6444029>, (accessed 5.08.2025); Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich, *Azerski gaz dla ukraińskiego gazoportu*, OSW, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/analizy/2011-02-02/azerski-gaz-dla-ukrainskiego-gazoportu>, (accessed 3.02.2025).

¹⁰ P. Janusz, *Zasoby gazu ziemnego w Polsce jako czynnik poprawiający bezpieczeństwo*

Energy sources of the future: current situation, work on their implementation and prospects

In response to the growing problems associated with the use of fossil fuels, many innovative solutions have emerged, some of which have already been experimentally implemented. A common feature of fuels of the future is their minimal or even zero emissions, as well as their much higher energy efficiency compared to traditional fossil fuels. One such fuel that is already partly being used in industry is Helium 3. Qatar, Russia and the United States have the largest reserves of this element. Poland is one of six countries which are both possessors and producers of Helium 3. We produce approximately 800 tonnes of this raw material annually, of which we sell almost 600 tonnes.¹¹ In the future, perhaps not for a long time, Helium 3, a rare element, will be used in the energy industry. Resources of this element on Earth are limited, but much larger amounts are found on the Moon, where samples have already been experimentally collected. The exploitation of Helium 3 from the Moon is becoming more and more realistic. To illustrate the potential, 500 kg of Helium 3 is enough to power a city the size of Berlin, inhabited by 3.5 million people, for a year. Helium 3 is a much more efficient energy source than other fuels, and its energy output exceeds that of crude oil by 1,400%. Thanks to its one neutron instead of two, Helium 3 has a wide range of applications not only in energy, but also in medicine and aviation. The most important thing, however, is that it can be used as fuel in thermonuclear fusion reactions, which allows the production of clean energy. Moreover, the process is zero-emission, and the only by-products are Helium-4 and hydrogen, with no carbon dioxide emissions or radioactive waste.¹² Difficulties related to the limited resources of Helium 3 on Earth could be solved by developing technology to transport this element from the Moon. There are stocks of Helium 3 on the Moon that could meet our planet's energy needs for about 250 years.

energetyczne na tle wybranych państw UE, "Polityka Energetyczna" 2010, iss. 1, pp. 36–37.

¹¹ I. Trusewicz, *Gazprom stawia na Hel*, Rzeczpospolita, <https://energia.rp.pl/gaz/art/18011791-gazprom-stawia-na-hel>, (accessed 3.02.2025).

¹² *Izotop z księżycy wywoła rewolucję w energetyce?*, Energetyka 24, <https://energetyka24.com/atom/izotop-z-ksiezycy-wywola-rewolucje-w-energetyce>, (accessed 4.02.2025).

The impact of the external environment and the situation of the energy sector

The global network of economic connections, which is gaining strength every year, is increasingly influencing political strategies, including those related to energy security. These strategies cannot be implemented in isolation from the broader political and economic context. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted how disruptions in supply chains or the absence of one important entity in international circulation can have a significant impact on the situation of other countries, although the effects of this impact vary. Therefore, a correct analysis of a given country's energy policy must take into account external factors that often have a dominant influence. Politicians, forced to respond to these changes, are adapting their strategies, building them from scratch. Many factors are crucial, while others have a more transitory impact, but they are virtually impossible to ignore in energy policy, both at global and regional levels. More and more new entities in international relations are gaining greater influence on the global economy, including the energy sector, at the expense of traditional powers. Countries that export energy resources use their dominant position to obtain political and economic concessions from countries that must import raw materials. Therefore, their energy policy is not limited only to the sale of raw materials, and there are no signs that this trend will change in the near future.¹³

Membership in regional and international organisations means that countries no longer have full control over the situation on national or transnational markets for energy raw materials. An example of this phenomenon is the situation of the European Union, which is assessed both in terms of institutional and national interests. Problems related to energy security were ignored for many years, which led to the outbreak of an armed conflict that spread to the eastern part of Europe and affected all European countries politically and economically. This mainly affected the natural gas and oil sectors, although in the case of oil, the impact was smaller due to better transport options. Financial mechanisms used in contracts and transfers are also an important factor shaping the situation on the global energy raw materials market, including the European market. An example may be the impact of sanctions on the Russian energy sector, which on the one hand slowed down the growth of export earnings, but on the other hand were

¹³ A. Grabowska, *Dylematy energetyczne Federacji Rosyjskiej*, "Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego" 2009, no. 1, pp. 78–88.

used by Russia to “newly open” the international raw materials market. After 1989, the key goal of Polish foreign policy was joining the European Union and NATO. This choice resulted from a deep sense of threat posed to Poland by Russia, which continued tsarist and Soviet traditions. Russian influence on Polish politics, economic and social affairs has been dominant since 1717, when Tsar Peter I introduced significant changes to the Polish political system which resulted in Poles being deprived of the right to vote. This domination lasted until the interwar period and until 1989, with some interruptions. One of the significant threats to Poland’s security was its dependence on energy resources imported directly from Russia or transported via the Russian transmission infrastructure.

The concept of developing the energy raw materials market in Europe, developed by the European Union institutions, differed significantly from the vision of the energy sector presented by the Polish authorities since its accession to the EU. There was a clear division between Western European countries and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, especially the Visegrad Group countries and the Baltic states, which were former members of the USSR. In Western Europe, especially in Germany, France, Italy and Austria, there was a belief in the need to maintain close energy relations with Russia, which resulted from attractive natural gas prices and effective lobbying by Russian companies for its sale. This energy policy was intended to create competition for the economic policies of the US and China, which were based on higher prices of hydrocarbon raw materials than Russian prices.

When analysing changes in the European Union’s energy security strategy, which are also of key importance for Poland, other factors that affect the global energy raw materials market, in which Europe plays an important role, should also be taken into account. Despite the ongoing transformation towards renewable energy sources, hydrocarbons remain the foundation of the economic power of states and international institutions and are strongly linked to the interests of individual countries. Unfortunately, the depletion of natural gas and crude oil resources and the abandonment of Russian energy resources, or at least their significant reduction, may lead to greater dependence on the USA, which is becoming a key supplier of hydrocarbons to Europe. It is important to note that while the US is a strategic security partner, in the economic sphere it acts as a competitor to the European Union, both on a general scale and in the context of national interests. Temporary agreements on the import of American LNG to Europe, resulting from the current situation on the Russian-Ukrainian front, may turn out to be unfavourable not only for the European energy sector, but also for the

entire EU economy. Currently, settlements for American LNG are made via the American stock exchange and not based on global trends, which may lead to unfavourable changes in the structure of trade in energy raw materials.

For almost three decades, after regaining full sovereignty, Poland was dependent on Russian supplies of natural gas and crude oil, which played a dominant role in the Polish energy sector. Over the years, as the infrastructure was expanded, this dependence began to decrease, and after the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict, it gradually disappeared. Although we have stopped importing natural gas directly from Russia since 2022, we still obtain crude oil, which Polish refineries process at a high profit. However, also in this case we are observing a noticeable decline in the amount of oil imported from Russia. After 2014, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, which was initially frozen, turned into a full-scale war in February 2022, continuing with varying intensity, depending on the losses of both sides, the availability of weapons and weather conditions. This conflict has caused significant changes in international geopolitics and in the energy sector, especially in the field of raw materials. It has also accelerated the process of abandoning Russian gas and oil in favour of other sources of hydrocarbons, which has worsened the economic situation of many European Union countries. As a result, the price structure is changing and Urals oil has become cheaper than Brent oil, leading to an increase in illegal transactions. The armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine also affected the import of hard coal from Russia, which negatively affected Poland. As a result of the imposed sanctions, Poland limited its possibilities of obtaining this raw material, especially high-calorific coal, which was competitively priced compared to other suppliers. Poland has started an intensive search for new contractors who could replace Russia in the supply of this key raw material for the energy sector. Even though producers were found to fill the supply gaps, it became obvious that it would be necessary to accelerate the process of abandoning hard coal as the main raw material for the production of heat and electricity.

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Summary

After 1989, Poland underwent a significant transformation in the field of energy security, which was based on the diversification of sources of energy raw materials and the development of gas infrastructure. Despite limited domestic extraction of raw materials, a key step towards increasing energy independence was accession to the European Union, which enabled the development of gas connections with neighbours, including Germany, Ukraine, and the construction of the LNG terminal in Świnoujście and the Baltic Pipe project. Despite this, Poland still struggles with a gas balance deficit, and dependence on imported gas remains a challenge. It is important to remember and continue to take into account that changes should also be undertaken through well-led participation and dialogue.¹⁴

In parallel, the country has made efforts to decarbonize the energy sector, developing renewable sources and planning to introduce nuclear energy. However, this process is hampered by the high costs of transformation and the need to reduce dependence on imported raw materials. Changes in the diversification of crude oil sources, especially thanks to the expansion of the infrastructure at Naftoport, help reduce the risk in this area. As a result of the Russian-Ukrainian war, Poland is in a position to achieve greater energy security through the development of energy infrastructure, international cooperation and investment in alternative energy sources, which will simultaneously reduce CO₂ emissions and increase the country's economic stability.

Poland currently faces the challenge of completing the decarbonization process, which involves significant financial and social costs. Despite the development of infrastructure and the diversification of supply sources, there is still a need for further investments and international cooperation to ensure the country's energy stability. The conclusions from the analysis indicate the need to continue activities to develop technology, diversify sources of raw materials and adapt to changing geopolitical and economic realities, which will allow Poland to maintain energy security in the long term. The Russian-Ukrainian conflict has had a significant impact on Poland's energy security, accelerating the need to diversify sources of energy raw materials and building alternative gas supply routes. Disruptions in gas supplies from Russia, which was one of the key energy sources, forced Poland to accelerate the development of LNG infrastructure and projects such as the Baltic Pipe. Consequently, the Ukrainian war highlighted the need to further energy transformation, increase energy independence and strengthen cooperation with international partners to ensure energy stability.

¹⁴ K. Jurek, *Dialog i partycypacja obywatelska na poziomie lokalnym na przykładzie miasta Krakowa*, "Zeszyty Naukowe Collegium Witelona" 2023, no. 49(4), pp. 49–59, <https://doi.org/10.5604/01.3001.0054.5169>.

Oryginalna praca badawcza

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INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN POLITICAL AND MILITARY ASPECTS

BEZPIECZEŃSTWO MIĘDZYNARODOWE I NARODOWE W ASPEKCIE POLITYCZNYM I WOJSKOWYM

Abstract: The article presents issues concerning the interrelationship of international and national security in the most important aspects, namely political and military. Due to the complexity of the issues the main focus is on the relationship of international security guaranteed by international organisations, selected international treaties and lasting military alliances to state security. In terms of national security, the impact of the presented international law solutions on the specific situation of European countries in the era of the ongoing Ukrainian-Russian conflict is indicated.

Zarys treści: W artykule przedstawiono kwestie dotyczące wzajemnych powiązań bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego i narodowego w najważniejszych aspektach, a mianowicie politycznym i militarnym. Z uwagi na złożoność problematyki skupiono się głównie na relacjach między bezpieczeństwem międzynarodowym, gwarantowanym nie tylko przez organizacje międzynarodowe, ale także przez wybrane traktaty międzynarodowe oraz trwałe sojusze wojskowe, a bezpieczeństwem państwa. W ramach bezpieczeństwa narodowego zwrócono uwagę na wpływ przedstawionych rozwiązań z zakresu prawa międzynarodowego na specyficzną sytuację krajów Europy w dobie trwającego konfliktu ukraińsko-rosyjskiego.

Keywords: international security, national security, treaty, foreign policy, armed conflict.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe, bezpieczeństwo narodowe, traktat, polityka zagraniczna, konflikt zbrojny.

The article aims to show the interrelationship of international and national security in political and military aspects. Given the significant change in US foreign policy in international relations after the US election, the goal is also to show its impact on the behaviour of other NATO allies. Previous international security achievements, particularly those developed over the years by the UN and other international organisations, are slowly beginning to be overshadowed by the policies of President Donald Trump. Showing this phenomenon is also a purpose of the article.

Security is a dynamic, ambiguous concept and multifaceted. Taking into account the functioning of state institutions and participation in the international system, the most important aspects of security for the state are twofold: political and military. Each country, functioning in the environment of other states, pursues many interests and international security occupies a special place among them. Participating in international relations, the state permanently strives to ensure and maintain an adequate level of security, thereby guaranteeing its survival and ensuring its comprehensive development. However, these activities depend on several factors, which include military considerations.

International security allows the determination of not only the external aspects of security of individual states, but primarily to describe the certainty of survival and functioning of the international system. So, it is used not only to analyse the situation of individual states, but primarily to describe the security of their collectivity, taking into account the importance of other participants in international relations.¹

State security in international relations is not a static concept, but a dynamic one, depending on certain historical, political, military or ideological conditions. These must be taken into account by states seeking to maintain international security. In other words, it is a set of measures to ensure a state's international freedom from fear, threats and aggression. In general terms, inter-

¹ R. Zięba (ed.), *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe po zimnej wojnie*, Wydawnictwa Akademickie i Profesjonalne, Warszawa 2008, p. 122.

national security means the system of international relations that ensures the common security of the states that make up the international system.²

The dynamics of change in the field of international security, the evolution of challenges and threats and ways to reduce and eliminate them, changes in the mentality and expectations of citizens and rulers provide an opportunity to search for factors that affect this process. Undeniably, security is affected by the emergence of new weapons, the formation of alliances or the process of globalisation. Taking into account several such phenomena, it is possible to identify factors that shape perceptions of security. They are crucial to actors' understanding of international security. Among the factors presented by the literature on the subject, a notable one is the military aspect, the importance of which was downplayed after the end of the Cold War, but nevertheless seems to continue to play a very important role today.³ This is demonstrated by recent events in Ukraine or on the Polish-Belarusian border, which make us think about its role in contemporary international relations. Norms prohibiting the use of force alone are not sufficient here. Many security threats will require a more decisive, but precise, use of force, taking into account the capabilities of modern armed forces.

International security has a significant impact on what happens in each country. The structure of ties between countries (economic, social and historical) implies a variety of actions in each country. This was vividly confirmed by the conflict in Ukraine. The three-year war has caused most European countries to update their political and military doctrines and European governments have revised their approach to security issues. Some political decisions were made at the international level, which more-or-less resulted in subsequent decisions in individual countries. So, we can conclude that international security is undoubtedly of great importance to national security, and European countries have, for the most part, reevaluated their priorities since 2022.

In an international perspective, the security of European countries has deteriorated since the beginning of 2025 due to a dramatic change in US foreign policy. The specific security umbrella that the Americans had extended over Europe was closed. Economic interests took precedence over the common reasonably durable arrangements of the North Atlantic Pact. Because of such developments, the Western states of the Old Continent should create a separate security system as

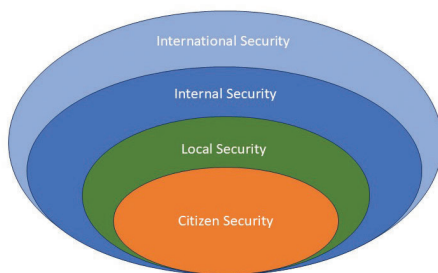
² K. Żukrowska, M. Grącik (eds.), *Bezpieczeństwo międzynarodowe. Teoria i praktyka*, Wydawnictwo SGH, Warszawa 2006, p. 68.

³ See W. Kostecki, *Bezpieczeństwo Polski a dynamika stosunków międzynarodowych*, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, Warszawa 2012.

soon as possible, a system independent of NATO, but somehow parallel to the alliance. The geopolitical situation of future years may change so much that the United States will redirect its interest to China, exposing its European allies and exposing them to a clash with Russia. It is therefore necessary to quickly build common European defence structures, and perhaps return to the concept of a European Armed Forces.

Ensuring national security is undoubtedly linked to local security. Events related to the fall of “stray” missiles, or the issue of firm protection of the state border in the counties of the “eastern wall” emphatically confirm the validity of this thesis. The state responds to local security challenges by activating its capabilities at the national level. All this is intended and serves directly or indirectly the security of the citizen. This is because the state performs its tasks at the international, national and local levels fulfilling its servant role towards its own citizens. Hence, we can speak of security circles, which naturally interrelate and form a vertical and horizontal system at the same time.

Figure 1. Security circles



Source: own study.

Every state, regardless of its size or importance in the international arena, recognises security issues in the broadest sense as a priority of its policies. After all, one of the basic functions of a state is to strive (both internationally and domestically) to provide its citizens and entities operating on its territory with the broadest possible security. However, in the modern world, effective minimisation of threats can only be achieved in the framework of international cooperation, since “no single state can face modern complex threats alone.”⁴

⁴ C. Mojsiewicz, W. Malendowski (eds.), *Stosunki międzynarodowe. Praca zbiorowa*, Wydawnictwo Atla 2, Wrocław 2004, p. 243.

International security in military terms encompasses a variety of issues related to maintaining peace and stability globally and regionally through military action and military strategies. There are several key areas in this regard. Military alliances, such as NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), play a key role in shaping international security. Article Five of the treaty states that any armed attack on one of the member states will be treated by the other states as an attack on themselves, and in such a situation each member of the alliance will assist the attacked party by taking such action as it deems necessary, including the use of armed force. NATO's actions constitute an important military aspect of international security, not least because of its shared military resources and by enabling its members to use them. These include military bases, defence technologies and armed forces that are interoperable, meaning they can work together in joint military operations. Regular joint exercises and training increase combat readiness and the ability to respond quickly to threats. This provides greater efficiency and defensive power than if countries acted alone. In addition, advanced military technologies act as a deterrent against potential aggressors, which significantly improves the defence capabilities of member states.

NATO promotes international security cooperation, which contributes to better coordination of activities and information exchange among member states. This, in turn, enhances the effectiveness of defence and prevention activities. Through all of these elements, NATO plays a key role in ensuring security and stability on the international stage, acting as a foundation for common defence and deterrence against potential threats.

An important organisation influencing international security is, for example, the United Nations (UN), whose main purpose is to maintain international peace and international security, respect human rights, improve living standards and promote social progress. The UN Security Council can decide on military interventions, sanctions and other measures to prevent armed conflict and maintain peace by conducting peacekeeping missions to stabilise conflict-affected regions, protect civilians, provide humanitarian aid and prevent massive human rights violations. Conventions and treaties, such as the UN Charter, the Geneva Conventions and Security Council resolutions, form the legal basis for international security activities.

The UN is also working to reduce arms and arms control. Examples include international treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the activities of the Committee on Disarmament to prevent arms escalation and promote disarmament. The UN supports member states in

building defence and security capabilities through training, advisory and technical programs. This support contributes to enhancing the ability of states to ensure internal and regional security. In addition, it plays an important role in the global fight against terrorism by coordinating international efforts, creating legal norms and supporting states in developing counter-terrorism strategies. Through these activities, the UN is a key aspect of the international security system, promoting peace, stability and cooperation on the global stage.

Balancing armaments and disarmament initiatives are key to maintaining stability. Negotiations on the reduction of nuclear arsenals, such as START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty)⁵ between the US and Russia, are examples of efforts to reduce arms capabilities. International cooperation on arms control is aimed at preventing an arms race and increasing transparency and trust between states. The New START, signed in 2010, is the current treaty between the US and Russia. The treaty commits each side to limit the number of deployed strategic nuclear warheads to 1,550 and the number of ballistic missile, bomber and submarine-launched launchers to 800, of which only 700 can be deployed. The new START also introduces strict verification mechanisms, including inspections and data sharing, to ensure compliance with its provisions. Negotiating the reduction of nuclear arsenals has several key benefits for maintaining international security:

- reducing the number of nuclear warheads and their means of delivery reduces the risk of accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons and potential escalation of conflicts,
- these treaties and related verification mechanisms help build trust between nuclear powers, which is crucial for strategic stability,
- reductions in nuclear arsenals by the major nuclear powers set an important example for other countries, which can encourage them to take similar steps and strengthen global non-proliferation regimes,
- the START treaties and similar initiatives promote the idea of global disarmament and support international efforts to create a world free of nuclear weapons.

These treaties are very important for international security and the maintenance of global peace and stability, as the reduction of nuclear arsenals and the

⁵ Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) – the first of the “strategic arms reduction treaties,” part of the START series, concluded between the United States and the Soviet Union. It was the first US-Soviet international agreement on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons. It was signed in Moscow on 31 July 1991.

reduction of nuclear risks are key to preventing disasters with unimaginable consequences.⁶

Modern military technologies have a significant impact on international security, affecting defence strategies, conflict dynamics and the balance of power. Technological advances are influencing the nature of modern conflicts, which combine conventional military operations with cyberattacks, disinformation and other forms of irregular warfare, thereby challenging traditional security structures.⁷

Cyber security is becoming an increasingly important element of countries' defence strategies. Today's computer and Internet technologies are introducing new threats in the form of cyber attacks that can cripple critical infrastructure, energy, communications and financial systems. Cyber warfare is becoming a key component of defence strategies and protecting against cyber attacks is a priority for countries around the world. Artificial intelligence and robotics are revolutionizing the battlefield with the introduction of autonomous drones, vehicles and defence systems. AI can analyse real-time data, optimise military decisions and predict enemy movements, making military operations more efficient. Autonomous systems can perform high-risk missions without risking human life.

Satellite technology is crucial for communications, navigation and Earth observation. Satellites provide vital intelligence, monitor troop movements and enable global communications. The increase in military use of space is also leading to competition in this new operational domain. Advanced defence systems, such as missile shields, are capable of detecting and neutralising threats in real time. These systems use advanced radar, satellite and computer technology to track and destroy incoming missiles and other threats.

Advances in biotechnology can have both positive and negative consequences. Military medicine can benefit from new therapies and technologies, but there is also a risk of using biotechnology to create biological weapons. The impact of modern military technologies on international security is twofold. On the one hand, they can enhance defence and deterrence capabilities, contributing to stability and peace. On the other hand, the introduction of new technologies can lead to an arms race, escalation of conflicts and new forms of threats. Therefore,

⁶ See A. Hernandez-Polczyńska, *Procedury specjalne Rady Praw Człowieka ONZ*, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Nauk Prawnych PAN, Warszawa 2019.

⁷ S. Koziej, *Rozważania o bezpieczeństwie*, vol. 1, Oficyna Wydawnicza Uczelni Łazarskiego, Warszawa 2016, p. 144.

international cooperation and regulation are key to managing these technologies in a way that promotes global security.

International security, in its military aspect, is an essential element of international relations, and its provision requires action for the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the establishment of legal and institutional bases for stability and cooperation. The essential function of international security is institutionalised action for peace, stability and the development of states and societies locally, regionally and globally. This must be a coordinated collective action, as even the most powerful powers cannot guarantee international peace and order on their own.

In the 21st century, the quest for sustainable peace and security must constantly reconcile the diverse needs, interests and objectives of an exponentially growing number of actors in international relations. This leads, on the one hand, inevitably to an increase in challenges, threats, tensions and conflicts in the modern world and, on the other hand, to collective efforts that take the form of institutionalised interaction between organisations, alliances and other international structures created to address and overcome these threats.

The current phase is characterised by a variety of phenomena and factors determining the state of security, many of which are unpredictable. The hitherto international order was based on a system of balance of power based on the desire to increase the power of states, while assuming the flexibility of alliances to balance the power of states with opposing interests. The constant interplay of interests, above all of the great powers, as well as the awareness of the achievability of intended political and economic goals through war, has the effect of destabilising the international order and shaping a lasting sense of insecurity. If the current phase of the formation of a new international order continues for an extended period, the role of the superpowers and their activity will be increasingly dependent on the support of all states participating in the creation of security.

Two phenomena in the international order that were developed in the 20th century have become the basis for the construction of the current international security system. The first is based on the prohibition of force in international law and the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.⁸ The second is based on

⁸ The Briand-Kellogg Pact, also known as the Pact of Paris, an international treaty establishing the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy. It was proposed in 1927 by Aristide Briand, the French Foreign Minister, as a treaty between the United States and France, prohibiting war between the two countries. It was an attempt to integrate the United States into the French security system. Frank B. Kellogg, the US Secretary of State,

the assumption that the strength of peaceful states would fundamentally outweigh the strength of a potential aggressor or aggressors who intended to violate the principles of collective security. An example of a violation of this principle would be Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

In conclusion, international security in military terms is a complex and multi-dimensional issue that requires coordinated action on many levels. Military alliances, control of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, peacekeeping operations, arms reduction, the fight against terrorism, the adaptation of modern technologies and the pursuit of regional stability are key elements of strategies to maintain peace and security in the world.

Throughout history, security has been based primarily on military power. It has been the basis for the security of empires, kingdoms, principalities and later nation states. The building of military power has also been subordinated to such important areas as natural resources, demographic potential, scientific and technological progress, etc. The apogee of this phenomenon came during the two world wars in the 20th century, followed by the bipolar system of world order, characterised by the arms race and the Cold War. Its disintegration meant the 'unfreezing' of the multifaceted needs and interests of nation states, the re-emergence of old problems and conflicts as well as new forms and types of threats.

Indeed, these have materialised not so much externally as internally. The likelihood of large-scale conflicts has decreased, while the threat of internal disputes of an ethnic, cultural or religious nature has increased. The effect of these changes was a redefinition of threats, which shifted the focus from classic military threats, occurring mainly in the form of military aggression, to non-military threats. The time when the very understanding of security was reduced to traditional ways of countering military threats and developing military capabilities also came to an end. As a consequence, there has also been a redefinition of the concept of state power, which is no longer seen primarily from a military point of view. New non-military threats penetrated all spheres and areas of state activity, pushing the military security dimension into the background. Alongside defence, a broader term – security – began to be emphasised as more relevant to existing and emerging threats and challenges.

Thus, one might get the impression that, nowadays, military power has ceased to play an important role in states' security policies and strategies. Despite

responded with a proposal for a multilateral pact to reject war as an instrument of policy making. Kellogg's proposal was accepted by Briand.

changes and revaluations, the priority of military security, concerning the integrity and sovereignty of nation-states, remains unchanged both in strategies and in practical political activity. It is therefore worth tracing how the issue of military security has been framed in the work and results of the Strategic National Security Review, which is the culmination of nearly two years of work devoted to a systemic and integrated assessment of the state and future of international and national security. The review leads to a presentation of how the following issues have been covered in the review: the nature of anticipated military threats; the concept of the use of the Polish Armed Forces in the event of a threat to the security of the state by armed aggression; the development and technical modernisation of the military; the state of Poland's defence preparations and the improvement of the defence subsystem.

It is generally accepted that military threats are characteristic of national security. National security encompasses the use or threat of the use of military force by subjects of international law (states). This thesis is verified to some extent by terrorist attacks and the ability of non-state structures to use armed violence to achieve their own ends. In this context, the concept of military threat implies the real possibility of armed violence.

In the traditional view, a military threat is seen as the most serious threat to state security and is understood most generally as a potential or existing danger of armed violence – directly or indirectly – against national values and national interests. There are many examples in history of the direct and indirect use of armed violence as a tool to achieve political objectives. These include: demonstration of force; diversion, military blockade and provocation; military blackmail; border incident; limited use of armed violence; armed border clash; armed assault by informal groups, local or inter-state conflict. Another important feature of military threats is that they are derivative of problems and threats arising or anticipated in other spheres and policy areas. Failure to resolve emerging problems, contradictions and tensions on political, economic or social grounds can lead to the emergence of military threats. However, this is not a necessary condition. Instead, a necessary condition for their emergence is a political decision resulting in the use of armed force (armed violence), hence such threats are often referred to as political-military. It is also considered that the source of military threats is not only the military potential of other states or non-state organisations and the possibility of its aggressive use, but also one's own military weakness provoking opponents to violence. Countering this form of violence is the domain of defence (defensive) policy. Its essence is to maximise the chances

of preserving the existence of the state under military threats and, further, to optimise the functioning of the state in all areas of its activity. Defence therefore encompasses the activities of the entire state, and essentially boils down to countering military threats and mitigating or neutralising their effects using all available instruments, tools and means. Accordingly, defence is not just an area of activity for the armed forces, although it is often and quite commonly perceived as such. This is due, *inter alia*, to the fact that under conditions of a military threat to security, armed forces often become one of the ultimate instruments of defence policy and armed combat its primary means. This is especially the case when the use of other tools proves pointless, impossible or ineffective and the state cannot give up the pursuit of a strategic objective, postpone it or lower the requirements necessary to achieve it. Military security is equated with defence.

In the context of Polish interests in Europe, the primary and multilateral external guarantor of Poland's security remains the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. In the forum of the alliance it is particularly important for Poland to ensure an equal level of security for all its members, the effectiveness of NATO's multinational command system, automatic action in the event of threats, combat readiness of the air defence system, the development of the continental missile defence system and the strengthening of rapid response tools. Another Polish strategic priority, and the second external security guarantor after NATO, is the development of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy. From the point of view of Polish interests, it is important that the development of the CSDP is harmonised with the allied system and does not undermine either NATO's role in the European security system or the US military position on the European continent. Furthermore, from the point of view of Poland's interests, it is particularly important – in addition to maintaining a significant US presence in Europe – that the United States plays an active and leading role in NATO: engaging in maintaining the balance of power in the European theatre and participating (alongside NATO) in guaranteeing Poland's security. Moreover, given Russia's superpower ambitions and its desire to transform Europe's security system into a kind of informal concert of powers, Poland's security policy aims to effectively counter Russian influence in Europe.

In today's world, especially with the rise of asymmetric threats, the armed forces are used not only to counter external threats, but also in terms of internal security. As stated in the National Security Strategy, activities in the military sphere are aimed at maintaining and demonstrating the state's comprehensive readiness to respond effectively to military threats to Poland's independence

and territorial integrity. Tasks in this area are performed primarily by the Polish Armed Forces, which are ready to perform three types of missions: guaranteeing the state's defence and resisting armed aggression; supporting protective subsystems in the field of internal security and assisting society; participating in the process of stabilising the international situation, including international crisis management activities.

The state's defence mission also includes performing a military deterrence function by demonstrating readiness to defend itself with forces maintained in peacetime and readiness to mobilise them in the event of war. The legal aspects of military security can be found in a great many regulations of international law, e.g. the scope of authorisation to use military force, restrictions on the use of military force or measures to restore military security (including, inter alia, the obligation to protect non-combatants). In turn, national regulations on military security consist of defence law and military law.

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Summary

In conclusion, therefore, it can be said that national security is one of the key elements in the functioning of a state, ensuring the viability and development and the freedom to pursue national interests. It is linked to international security. It is based on a coherent policy of allied states. It must furthermore take into account the financial aspect, which

is one of the pillars of international security. A state cannot and should not base the security of its citizens solely on international treaties or assurances of external assistance. This is because the military security of a state depends on many variable economic and, of course, political factors.

On the occasion of his 70th birthday
the text was written in collaboration with the Author

**KMDR PPOR. SG RETIRED DR IRENEUSZ BIENIECKI
– OFFICER OF BORDER GUARD FORCES, BORDER
GUARD OFFICER OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND AND
RESEARCHER AT THE POMERANIAN ACADEMY IN SŁUPSK
(1955–2025)**

Dear Celebrant,

On the occasion of your 70th birthday, the entire Editorial Board of the journal “The Study of Security” extends to you its warmest wishes for health, prosperity and further professional and personal success. Your commitment to service to the Border Guard and your contribution to the development of science are invaluable achievements that will leave a lasting mark in the academic and practical community.

We would also like to thank you wholeheartedly for your many years of cooperation and your invaluable contribution to our journal. Your articles, which have appeared in almost every issue, enriched its content and contributed to the formation of a high level of content and building its reputation. Thanks to your knowledge, passion and commitment, you have become an integral part of our editorial community.

We wish that the next few years will bring you much joy, inspiring challenges and satisfaction in your further scientific work. May your health, strength and the kindness of your loved ones accompany you every day.

With best regards and gratitude,
Editors of the journal

Introduction

Ireneusz Bieniecki was born on 19 February 1955 in Włocławek, in what is now the Kuyavian-Pomeranian province. He began his education in elementary school in Toruń on what was then Hanka Sawicka Street. After graduating from elementary school in 1969, he continued his education at the then Mechanical and Electrical Technical School (TME), located at 26 Św. Józefa Street in Toruń.

Military school and service in the Border Protection Forces

Upon graduating from high school (TME), he initially took exams to the Higher Officer School of the Communication Forces (WOSW³) in Zegrze near Warsaw, where he spent two weeks taking entrance exams. However, he eventually enrolled in the one-year School for Border Protection Troops (SCH WOP) in Kętrzyn in September 1974, graduating on 15 May 1975.

On 4 October 1975, he began serving as a professional soldier in the then Kashubian Brigade of the Border Protection Troops (KB WOP) in Gdańsk Nowy Port (35 Oliwska Street). Initially, he was assigned to the WOP Port Battalion in Gdańsk, the structure of which included the battalion headquarters and three sub-divisions: the reverse watchtower, Vistula-East (No. 8) and New Port (No. 9). Ireneusz Bieniecki was assigned to the retreat watchtower, which was commanded by then Capt. Bolesław Wujciak. At the time, the commander of the Kashubian B WOP in Gdańsk was Col. Dipl. Marian Opalka. After him, until the end of its functioning (15 May 1991), the unit was commanded by Colonel MA Jerzy Więckowski, a former officer of the Baltic WOP Brigade in Koszalin.¹

I. Bieniecki's interest in humanities subjects in the mid-1970s aroused in him the desire to study humanities at the University of Gdańsk. As a result, despite a variety of difficulties arising from the fact that he remained in the corps of ensigns and performed many service activities related to the training of soldiers

¹ I. Bieniecki, *Noty biograficzne wybranej kadry kierowniczej formacji ochraniających polską granicę morską w latach 1945-1991, cz. 1*, "Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej" 2013, no. 3 (65), pp. 76–96; idem, *Noty biograficzne wybranej kadry kierowniczej formacji ochraniających polską granicę morską w latach 1945-1991, cz. 2*, "Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej" 2013, no. 4 (66), pp. 65–72; idem, *Noty biograficzne wybranej kadry kierowniczej formacji ochraniających polską granicę morską w latach 1945-1991, cz. 3*, "Biuletyn Centralnego Ośrodka Szkolenia Straży Granicznej" 2014, no. 1 (67), pp. 91–100.

and service in the protection of the maritime border, he undertook a master's degree-awarded studies at the University of Gdańsk (UG) in 1977, majoring in non-teaching Polish philology, specializing in the dissemination of culture. During his studies at the Faculty of Humanities, he had contact with a group of lecturers that included then and later UG professors, including: Józef Bachórz, Edward Breza, Stefan Chwin, Jan Data, Zofia Głabiowska, Anna Habryn, Anna Kubale, Edward Łuczyński, Anna Martuszevska, Tadeusz Oracki, Julian Platt, Bronisław Rocławski, Bronisława Stolarska, Jerzy Trederd, Ludwik Wierzbowski, Stefan Zabłocki and many others .

It was also at this time that his cooperation began with the WOP weekly *Granica*, for which he was a correspondent, *Soldier of Freedom and the Navy* (MW) weekly *Bandera*, and later with the editors of other magazines. In their pages he posted his first studies in the form of book reviews and information about the service of soldiers in the protection of the maritime border.

In the autumn of 1981, he graduated from the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Gdańsk with a master's degree in Polish philology. He wrote his master's thesis entitled "Moral ideals in the short epic forms of Bolesław Prus" under the supervision of then Associate Professor Anna Martuszevska (later Professor at UG). He received his master's degree in Polish philology on 28 October 1981.

In the subdivisions of the Kashubian WOP Brigade in Gdańsk-Nowy Port, from 1975 to 1984, he served in various line and staff positions. Despite his intensive professional work, he still intended to educate himself. To this end, between 1983 and 1985, he continued his studies on a two-year Postgraduate Programme in Political Science at the then Institute of Political Science at the UG Faculty of Humanities. At that time, the group of lecturers in political science included: Kazimierz Podoski (then director of the institute), Marcei Burdelski, Czesław Ciesielski, Andrzej Sobociński and Olgierd Sochacki. The thesis entitled "Military Policy Towards the Eastern Borderlands in the Years of the Second Polish Republic" was written under the direction of then Associate Professor Czesław Ciesielski (later Professor at UG). His take on the issue of the military in the eastern borderlands of the Second Republic was later developed by him in further research, which resulted in his doctoral dissertation and his first published monograph in the mid-1990s. He graduated from the Postgraduate School of Political Science on 11 June 1985.

From 21 August 1984 to 31 March 1986, he served in the WOP Command in Warsaw (DWOP-A1. Niepodległości 100), which allowed him to look at the formation from a broader perspective and become familiar with other organisational

units. Then, until the dissolution of the WOP formation in 1991, he served again in the Kashubian WOP Brigade in Gdańsk-Nowy Port.²

While serving in this formation, for his popularisation activities in the pages of the military press at the time, in 1988 he received the “Bronze Feather” award of the daily newspaper of the Polish Army “Soldier of Freedom” in the field of combat training and popularisation of educational initiatives and experiences. He was one of 22 nationwide authors awarded at the time, outside the full-time editorial staff of the newspaper. A ceremonial meeting of the laureates combined with the presentation of awards was held on 13 June 1988 at the Capital Garrison Club at 2 Żelazna Brama Square in Warsaw.³

In addition, in the elections to national councils on 19 June 1988, he was elected councillor of the Municipal National Council (MRN) in Gdańsk.⁴

Ireneusz Bieniecki served in the WOP formation from 25 September 1974 to 15 May 1991, including professional military service from 4 October 1975 to 15 May 1991.⁵

Officer of the Marine Division of Border Guard in Gdańsk

After the dissolution of the WOP, from 16 May 1991 to 30 April 2005, he served in the new formation protecting the borders of the Republic of Poland, as an officer of the Border Guard (SG) in the Maritime Branch of the Border Guard (MOSG) in Gdańsk Nowy Port at 35 Oliwska St. The commander of this unit was initially kmdr/contradmiral SG Stanisław Lisak and then kmdr/contradmiral SG Konrad Wiśniowski.

In the middle of 1992, the Competition Commission of the Polish Society for the History of Technology (PTHT) held a competition entitled “Achievements of

² Odpis przebiegu służby wojskowej z akt personalnych żołnierza (...) WKU Gdańsk-2 z 6.05.2004 r., p. 1 (in the collection of I. Bieniecki).

³ G. Goryński, *Laureat z Kaszubskiej Brygady WOP*, “Granica” 1988, no. 48 (2005), p. 5; Pismo Redaktora Naczelnego „Żołnierza Wolności” płk. mgr. Zdzisława Janośa do I. Bienieckiego z 6.06.1988 r., p. 1 (in the collection of I. Bieniecki).

⁴ Pismo z 11.07.1988 r. przewodniczącego MRN mgr Janusza Lewińskiego do Kaszubskiej BWOP w Gdańsku, (in the collection of I. Bieniecki).

⁵ Zaświadczenie nr 192/08 WKU w Gdańsku z 25.09.2008 r. (copy in the collection of I. Bieniecki). During his service in the WOP and SG, he was promoted to higher military ranks: ml. chor. – 23.08.1975, chor. – 2.10.1978, ppor. – 4.10.1982, por. – 17.09.1985, kpt. – 25.09.1989, mjr. – 25.10.1996.

Polish technical thought in the interwar period,” in which I. Bieniecki received an honourable mention (financial) for his submitted work (article) entitled “Projects and prototypes of river vessels of the Pinsk flotilla.”⁶ This was as a result of his interest in the Pinsk Flotilla of the MW of the Second Republic.

While serving as an officer in the Maritime Division of the Border Guard, he was a participant in a doctoral seminar conducted by the then Associate Professor Czesław Ciesielski at the University of Gdańsk. In the mid-1990s, after passing the prescribed examinations by a resolution of 16 March 1995 of the Scientific Council of the Institute of History at the Faculty of Philology and History of the University of Gdańsk, on the basis of his doctoral dissertation entitled “The River Flotilla of the Navy in Pinsk 1919-1939,” written under the supervision of Prof. UG Ph.D. Czesław Ciesielski, he received the degree of Doctor of Humanities in history-most recent history. The reviewers of the doctoral dissertation were Dr. Józef Wiesław Dyskant-doc. of the Military Historical Institute (WIH) in Warsaw and Prof. Roman Wapiński of the University of Gdańsk. The defence of his doctoral thesis took place on 16 March 1995. During this time, he held various managerial positions at the MOSG in Gdańsk. On 30 April 2005, he ended his permanent service in the MOSG in Gdańsk and went into the reserves. After leaving the service of the MOSG he did not undertake professional work for three years, devoting himself to matters of science and participation in scientific conferences. On 5 December 2008, he was awarded the commemorative Mark of Honour of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland for his long-standing cooperation with the naval magazine “Przegląd Morski.”

Scientific work at the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk

On 1 October 2008, the then Rector of the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk, Ph.D., prof. nadzw. Roman Drozd, appointed Ireneusz Bieniecki to the position of assistant professor in the Department of National Security. Its first head was prof. zw. dr hab. Andrzej Peplonski.

From 1 October 2008 to 30 June 2018 and from 1 October 2019 to 30 July 2020 (with an interruption) he was employed as a full-time assistant professor at the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk in the Department of National Security

⁶ Pismo nr 1. dz. 04/42/92 Sekretarza Generalnego Polskiego Towarzystwa Historii Techniki (PTHT) mgr inż. J. Czerwińskiej do I. Bienieckiego z 2.06.1992 r. (in the collection of I. Bieniecki).

(NSC), and later at the Institute of National Security (IBN) of the Faculty of Management and Security Sciences. During the 2009/2010 academic year he was an assistant professor in the Department of Defence Policy, and the successive positions he held were based on the organisational structures in place at that time.

As previously mentioned, in the first years the head of the Department of National Security was Prof. Dr. A. Peplonski. At that time there were only 15 people in the organisational structure of the NSC.

In addition, during the 2018/2019 academic year, Dr. I. Bieniecki taught students in the security course at the Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski School of Administration and Business in Gdynia.

Since he had a wealth of academic achievements, just before he ended his work in Słupsk in 2019, he again won the competition for the position of assistant professor at the university. His work in Słupsk ended definitively on 30 July 2020.

Scientific achievements of Ireneusz Bieniecki – achievements in scientific work before obtaining the doctoral degree

The main area of scientific interest of Dr. I. Bieniecki was the issue of the security of the Polish borders. However, in the 1970s and 1980s his scientific interests were already focused on the problems of military history in the broadest sense. During this period he published a number of popular science articles in “Granica,” “Soldier of Freedom” and “Bandera,” as well as scientific articles in such journals as “Przegląd Morski,” “Historical Bulletin” of the Naval Museum in Gdynia, “Nautology,” “War Ships,” “Military Historical Review” and other short publications. The summary of this area of research interest was a doctoral dissertation entitled “The River Flotilla of the Navy in Pinsk 1919-1939.” The dissertation was a thorough and pioneering study of the formation, organisation and activities of the subdivisions of the Naval River Flotilla in Polesie. It was defended at the University of Gdańsk in March 1995, and its revised version was published in print in 2005 by the esteemed Adam Marszalek Publishing House in Torun. The publishing reviewers of this study were scientists with MW roots, employees of the then Pomeranian Pedagogical Academy in Słupsk, namely Prof. Jerzy Przybylski, PhD, and Prof. Bogdan Zalewski, PhD.

Achievements in scientific work after receiving his doctoral degree in history (in 1995)

I. Bieniecki continued his previous scientific interests, which with time became more detailed and evaluated leading to scientific-research results in the following nine areas: Navy of the Second Republic, border crime, border formations of the Second Republic, border protection formations after 1945, biography, book reviews and discussions, reports on scientific conferences, system and subsystems of border protection of the People's Republic of Poland and WOP education.

The first three areas of research should be considered primary after the doctoral degree. The fourth area of interest was demonstrated in one of his publications (book). Biographical studies, book reviews, conference reports and the system and subsystems of border protection of the People's Republic of Poland were undertaken by Dr. I. Bieniecki throughout the period. However the last area of interest, schooling of the WOP, was a new research topic, which resulted in more publications and which he successfully continues in his retirement.

In the first of the above-mentioned research areas, in addition to the texts written before the doctoral degree, the book "The River Flotilla of the Polish Navy in Pinsk in the Years 1925-1935 in Light of the Reports of the Army Inspectors and Officers of the Controller Corps" was published in 2005. It contains a detailed analysis of the process of formation and organisation of the flotilla during the years 1919-1939. An extension of the first research area includes a number of specialised articles in short publications and journals published during the period 1986-2015. These were scientific articles, biographies and book reviews on the subject.

The second research area, Border Crime, is reflected in articles in journals and short publications and reviews. The culmination of this area of interest was the publication in 2012 of a book entitled "Border crime on the Polish coast in the second half of the twentieth century. Selected problems." It was published by the Scientific Publishing House of the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk. This was not a closed area because within its framework the author participated in a scientific conference on this topic organised in 2015 by the IPN Branch in Szczecin, and then published (together with Izabela Szkurlat) two volumes of sources devoted to the discussion of characteristic cases of illegal border crossings of the People's Republic of Poland in the second half of the twentieth century, and published numerous articles in this area.

The third research area, Formations of border protection of the Second Polish Republic, includes articles published in journals and short publications, a detailed list of which is included in the list of scholarly achievements.

The fourth research area, Formations of border protection after 1945, refers to the activities of the WOP (including mainly the coastal brigades of this formation), the Maritime Brigade of Border Ships and the Border Guard after 1991. This is represented by the largest number of publications dealing with a variety of issues related to the broadly understood border problems, which appeared in the form of articles in journals and short publications. The culmination of the work devoted to this research area was a book entitled "Border Protection Troops and their place in the system of protection and defence of the Polish maritime border in the years 1965-1991," published by the Scientific Publishing House of the AP in Słupsk in 2015.

The fifth research area is biography. In this area I. Bieniecki published a number of articles presenting, among others, the lives and activities of: kmdr. Lt. Roman Somnicki, officer of the MW of the Second Republic and creator of the maritime service of the WOP; kmdr. Witold Zajączkowski, commander of the Pinsk Flotilla; subsequent commanders of this unit of the MW of the Second Republic; commanders of the Maritime Border Ship Brigade, kmdr. Henryk Romanek and kmdr. Ludwik Siwek; selected officer personnel serving in the protection of the Polish maritime border in the second half of the twentieth century (several dozen biographies); the first four commanders of the Border Guard Unit in Gdańsk Nowy Port; personnel of the contemporary Border Guard (such as kmdr. Lt. SG Krzysztof Wójcik or the director of the Border Guard Archive in Szczecin-dr. hab. Ryszard Techman); and the first rector of the Gdańsk University of Technology, prof. Aleksander Potyrały.

Discussions and reviews of books are the next research area that can be distinguished in the scientific activity of I. Bieniecki. This is reflected in dozens of discussions and reviews of various publications dealing with border and naval war issues and were published in the pages of: "Military Historical Review," "Maritime Review," "Nautology," "Bulletin" of the Central Border Guard Training Centre in Koszalin, Bulletin "Problemy Ochrony Granic" of the Border Guard Training Centre in Kętrzyn, and "Komunikaty Instytutu Bałtyckiego" in Gdańsk.

Another area of research, reports of scientific conferences, is also worth highlighting. I. Bieniecki, being a participant in dozens of scientific and popular science conferences until 2015, posted numerous reports from them which

appeared in professional periodicals, for both civilian and uniformed formations.

Dr. Ireneusz Bieniecki's eighth area of research concerns the system and subsystems of protection (applicable to specific sections) of the border of the People's Republic of Poland, including mainly the protection of the state border in the second half of the 20th century. This is reflected in a number of published articles included in specialised publications.

The last (ninth) and at the same time new, in addition to the eight already listed as basic areas of research interest of Dr. I. Bieniecki, was schooling and education of WOP. This new subject matter was gradually developed and resulted in further studies in this area in the form of articles. To date, studies have been published in this area concerning: the training of non-commissioned officers of this formation, the School of Marine Specialists of WOP in Gdańsk, the training of guides and service dogs for WOP, the Non-Commissioned Officer School of WOP in Kętrzyn, and a subsection in the book on this formation dedicated to the Training Centres for Non-Commissioned Officers and Junior Specialists of WOP. Selected issues on this subject were also presented later in the form of subsequent articles.

Since 2016, he has successfully collaborated with the journal "The study of Security," which has published six of his articles, the last two in co-authorship with Dr. Izabela Szkurlat.

Characteristics of teaching achievements

The main teaching activity of I. Bieniecki focused from 2008 on teaching the course of National Security (BN) implemented at the then AP in Słupsk. During this time, he implemented classes in numerous subjects in the form of: lectures, exercises, lectures and seminars, as well as consultations at the home unit. During his work from 2008 to 2015 at the Department of National Security and then the Institute of National Security at the Pomeranian Academy in Słupsk, he was responsible for the implementation of dozens of subjects.

During the course of teaching he used his extensive academic and research achievements as well as professional experience. In terms of content and form, he tried to prepare and conduct his classes in such a way that they showed students that the knowledge they would gain should prove useful in their future professional activities. During his tenure as an assistant professor at AP in

Słupsk he received high evaluations. For example, during the evaluation conducted by BN students at the end of the 2013/2014 academic year, he received an overall grade of 4.59 for the second semester.

Since 2011, he has repeatedly been a member of committees conducting examinations for undergraduate and graduate studies with BN.

Research achievements

While serving as an assistant professor he undertook a number of activities to disseminate research on border formations and border protection by publishing books, publishing articles and presenting papers at national and international conferences. By 2020, he was an active participant in dozens of conferences, where he presented, in the form of papers, the results of his research.

He has been a member of the Polish Nautological Society for many years. He was also a member of the Scientific and Research Association Baltic Institute in Gdańsk, where he served as chairman of the Audit Committee for many years.

Summary

In conclusion, it should be said that Dr. Ireneusz Bieniecki, during the period of his professional activity from the mid-1970s to the present, a period of nearly 50 years, has become known as a conscientious and valued researcher, both of the history of border formations in Poland and of the Polish MW.

At the end of this article it is also appropriate to cite a very positive assessment of the achievements of Dr. I. Bieniecki concerning his activities up to the beginning of the 21st century. It was presented in one of Jan Tyminski's articles in the second decade of this century.

“(…) The second author mentioned, Ireneusz Bieniecki, has been working on the history of the Pinsk Navy River Flotilla since the mid-1980s. The effects of his research were evident in the form of the publication of numerous articles or papers delivered at various conferences of which a great example was the scientific symposium on ‘Defending the Polish Sea. 75 years of the Polish Navy’ (…)”⁷

⁷ J. Tymiński, *Przegląd dorobku polskiej historiografii na temat Flotylli Rzecznej Marynarki Wojennej w Pińsku z lat 1919–1939*, “Biuletyn Historyczny Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni” 2016, no. 31, pp. 29–31.

It should also be mentioned that Dr. Bieniecki's academic achievements include authorship (and co-authorship) of five monographs and several hundred articles, which were published in, among others: "Granica"; "Soldier of Freedom"; "Bandera"; "Problems of Border Protection", published by CS SG in Kętrzyn; "Bulletin" of COS SG in Koszalin; "Historical Bulletin" of the MW Museum in Gdynia; "Maritime Review"; "Okręt Wojenny"; "Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny"; "Studiach Nad Bezpieczeństwem", published in Słupsk; "Zeszytach Naukowych" of the Air Force Training Centre in Koszalin; "Aparacie Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944-1989"; "Nautology"; the quarterly of the sociological and historical department of the University of Rzeszow in Rzeszow "UR JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES"; "Infantryman of the Sea"; the journal of the AMW in Gdynia "Colloquium"; "Rocznik Helski"; "Studie-Konteksty Pogranicza", published in Gorzow; "ACTA UNIVERSITATIS LODZIENSIS FOLIA HISTORICA"; "Nowosci", a Torun journal; "Wars and Armed Conflicts after 1945. A Collection of Studies", published by the Museum of Land Forces in Bydgoszcz; "Przegląd Wojsk Lotniczych i Obrony Powietrznej" and "Słupskie Studia Historyczne"/"Scripta Historica."

In addition, he has promoted dozens of bachelor's and master's degrees, and with regard to 17 undergraduate theses, he was their reviewer.

Therefore, taking into account his professional experience and the scientific achievements presented above, Dr. Bieniecki can be considered an outstanding expert and specialist in the field of protection and defence of the Polish borders of the 20th and 21st centuries.

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