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# THE ROLE OF POLAND IN ENSURING EUROPEAN SECURITY

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## Abstract

Safety is one of the basic human needs. It should be understood that in order to be able to function properly and develop, a person needs appropriate conditions. One of the primary conditions is the guarantee of security, both looking through the prism of the individual and the general public. Previous disputes, conflicts and wars determine future political decisions and affect the type of international alliances formed. The guarantor of security is above all a stable, well-organized and strong state, as well as citizens who are aware of the responsibility for this security. Every country needs a strong ally to increase its security on the international arena.

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Eastern Europe, including Poland, dropped the shackles of the Soviet occupation and turned its eyes to the west, seeking military support within that area. Membership in NATO has made Poles feel relatively safe since 1999. Poland's allies have become members of the Alliance, whose strongest link is the United States. Poland's position on the map of Europe determines its impact on the situation of the entire continent. European geopolitics mainly affects the conditions, security and politics of the Polish state. The aim of the article is to characterize the role of the Member States of the European Union

in ensuring European security, on the example of Polish. This article constitutes an analysis and was created based on content analysis method and qualitative statistical data analysis.

## **Keywords**

European Security, Battle Groups, crisis response, refugee, war

## Introduction

Security is one of the natural, basic and most important human needs. Everyone, regardless of their life and material standing, wants the reality around them to be at the same time a guarantee of a sense of security<sup>1</sup>. It is therefore a natural phenomenon that people want to lead a peaceful life, without fear for their own life, health and property and their loved ones. The guarantor of security is above all a stable, well-organized and strong state, as well as citizens aware of the responsibility for this security<sup>2</sup>. In the initial phase, security was limited only to the armed protection of the state's borders. Over time, many other areas that may endanger it were noticed and identified. Knowledge about them is therefore the basis for efficient and effective actions<sup>3</sup>. Bearing in mind the well-being of future generations, it is necessary to take care of their knowledge in the field of security. The goal of humanity is to improve its living conditions and leave its descendants the best possible conditions for their development<sup>4</sup>.

Security, along with a subjective sense of security, are basic human needs, both in the individual and global dimension. Since 1993, the European Security and

Defense Policy has been one of the fundamental elements of the European Union's functioning. The security of modern countries, such as Poland is primarily determined by external factors. These include, first of all, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the European Union, the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the accepted norms of international law and neighboring countries<sup>5</sup>. The current global and European military, political, economic and cultural conditions limit the capabilities of the countries in question, which makes it impossible for them to be fully independent. The only guarantee of their security, sovereignty and development opportunities is therefore the combination of the state's internal forces with international forces<sup>6</sup>.

Poland's position on the map of Europe determines its impact on the situation of the entire continent. European geopolitics mainly affects the conditions, security and politics of the Polish state. Ignoring the past and history, no country will build a safe future<sup>7</sup>.

Previous disputes, conflicts and wars determine future political decisions and affect the type of international alliances. The centre of Europe is a place of strong influence of eastern and western policies<sup>8</sup>. It was here that views, and ideals

<sup>1</sup> R. Socha, *Bezpieczeństwo i zagrożenia – wzajemne relacje* [in:] *Wybrane aspekty badań nad bezpieczeństwem*, (ed.) B. Kaczmarczyk, A. Wawrzusiszyn, Elk 2014, pp. 32-34.

<sup>2</sup> W. Kolano, *Bezpieczeństwo Polski w trzeciej dekadzie XXI w.*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Pro Publico Bono”, SGSP, 1/2021, Warszawa 2021, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> R. Socha, *Współczesne postrzeganie zagrożeń* [in:] *Zarządzanie Kryzysowe: teoria, praktyka, konteksty, badania*, (ed.) J. Stawnicka, B. Wiśniewski, R. Socha, *Szczytno* 2011, p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> T. Paniecki, *Polityka bezpieczeństwa Polski w XX wieku i na początku XXI wieku*, Częstochowa 2008.

<sup>5</sup> *Strategiczny Przegląd Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego: rola, struktura, procedury*, Raport Instytutu Bezpieczeństwa Krajowego WSZP, Warszawa 2009.

<sup>6</sup> W. Kolano, *op. cit.*, p.22.

<sup>7</sup> *More: Biała Księga Bezpieczeństwa Narodowego Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, BBN, Warszawa 2013.

<sup>8</sup> *More: B. Buzan, O. Waver, J. de Wilde, Security: A New Framework for Analysis*, Lenne Rienner Publisher, Boulder London, 1998, (ed.) M. Malec, *Percepcja bezpieczeństwa: definicje, wymiary, paradygmaty*, MON, Departament Polityki Obronnej, Warszawa 2006.

clashed the most, and the ruthlessness and fanaticism of individual leaders destroyed the developed patterns and ideals.

The outbreak of World War II exposed the weaknesses of the then international guarantees and alliances, which was reflected primarily in Poland.

## Methodological and methodical assumptions

The history of security and defence of European politics is rooted in the history of European intergration. This is an area of research interest, as well as scientific activity of authors of the discussed text, which was manifested, among others, by the research paper entitled Security of Poland in the third decade of the twenty-first century. In research improvement, a very important role is played by the current confrontation of the current scientific achievements with the still passing time, because the adopted positive or negative assessment of the chosen research hypotheses is always of processual and temporal nature.

The content presented by the authors with conceptual assumptions was based primarily on the paradigm of historical institutionalism, the evolution of previously created thoughts and the methodology of repetitiveness.

The aim of the article is to characterize the role of the Member States of the European Union in ensuring European security, on the example of Polish. This article constitutes an analysis and was created based on content analysis method and qualitative statistical data analysis.

The hypotheses of the text under discussion were formulated as follows:

1. The Common Security and Defence Policy is a safeguard of the European Union in the context of ensuring operational capabilities based on both military and civilian means. The EU has the right to use these forces outside its borders in an effort to prevent conflict and maximise international security.
2. In pursuit of the objectives set by the European Union, member states make available their military and civilian capabilities under the Common Security and Defence Policy.
3. European Union member states with enhanced military capabilities and further commitments in this area have, for the sake of the toughest missions, the right to establish permanent structured cooperation within the grouping.
4. In the event of an armed attack on the territory of one of the European Union member states, the others are obliged to provide assistance and support to the fullest extent possible using all available means.
5. Bearing in mind that secure and stable partner countries constitute one of the key elements of the European Union's security strategy, the EU bloc must ensure its security both internally and in relation to its external partners when taking action.

## Poland in NATO in the context of building security

Following the history, we should state that there is no safe and strong state without strong allies. No modern European state is able to defend its territory against

a stronger and aggressive enemy. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, Eastern Europe, including Poland, dropped the shackles of the Soviet occupation and turned its eyes to the west, seeking military support within that area. Membership in NATO has made Poles feel relatively safe since 1999. Poland's allies have become members of the Alliance, whose strongest link is the United States<sup>9</sup>.

The creation of NATO is the creation of true international security, which, by contributing to the security of the Polish state, at the same time secures the whole of Europe. Because a safe Poland is a safe Europe. It is from Poland that the American troops operating on the eastern flank of NATO are commanded. By expanding the structure of the North Atlantic Alliance, the West has gained a greater sense of security. Russia's sphere of influence has moved to the east<sup>10</sup>. On the shoulders of the Polish state rested a huge responsibility for the fate of the Western world, whose eastern gate is the eastern border of Poland. It should be emphasized that an attack on one of the NATO countries is tantamount to an attack on all members of the North Atlantic Treaty<sup>11</sup>.

In the period from 1st to 27th May 2022, nine NATO member states host large-scale military exercises Defender Europe 2022 and Swift Response 2022. The exercises involve approx. 18,000 soldiers from over 20 countries of the world. The purpose of the cyclical, multinational

exercises carried out by the United States is to increase readiness and interoperability between allied states and partners of the United States and NATO. In the territory of Poland, Defender Europe 2022 exercises involve 7,000 soldiers and approx. 3,000 pieces of military equipment from Poland, the USA, Sweden, France, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom. To carry out the exercises, there were designated, among others, training ground facilities in Żagań, Drawsko Pomorskie and Bemowo Piskie. The Polish Armed Forces engaged soldiers from the 10th Armoured Cavalry Brigade, 2nd Mechanized Brigade, 17th Mechanized Brigade, 12th Mechanized Brigade, 25th Air Cavalry Brigade, 6th Airborne Brigade, 2nd Engineering Regiment, 5th Chemical Regiment, 9th Armoured Cavalry Brigade and Territorial Defence Army, and F-16 aircraft from 2nd Tactical Air Force Wings, Su-22 from 1st Tactical Air Force Wing and 3rd Transport Air Wings and Mi-24 helicopters from the 1st Air Force Brigade of Land Forces. The 5th Corps of the US Armed Forces is responsible for commanding all forces involved in the Defender Europe 2022 exercises.

On the other hand, the Swift Response 2022 exercises organized in Lithuania and Latvia aim to improve the opportunities for air operations. Polish, Dutch, Czech and German troops are involved in these exercises<sup>12</sup>.

The multinational USA-led Defender-Europe 20 exercise took place also in 2020. In the recent years, the exercise has constituted a fundamental test of the

<sup>9</sup> More: P. Turczyński, 15 lat Polski w NATO, Bellona 2015.

<sup>10</sup> More: R. Kupiecki, Organizacja Traktatu północno-atlantycznego, Warszawa, 2016.

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/wzmocniona-wysunieta-obecnosc>, [15.04.2022].

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.gov.pl/web/national-defence/exercises-defender-europe-2022-and-swift-response-2022-begin>, [16.04.2022].

North Atlantic Alliance's ability to support the movement of armed forces through Continental Europe and the Atlantic. The close cooperation of diverse military and civilian entities made it possible to deploy armed forces by sea, rail, road, and air. The experience gained in the course of the exercise maximises NATO's readiness and, at the same time, its resistance even in the most difficult security conditions. When reflecting on the essence of the mentioned Defender-Europe 20 and 22 exercises, one should refer to the Cold War period, when the Reforger exercise took place. It consisted in moving the NATO forces to one specific country<sup>13</sup>. It should be noted that during these times, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation expressed its full readiness to defend a very well-known territory against an equally well-known adversary. Thirty years after the last Reforger exercise, the security environment has become much more unpredictable, forcing NATO to plan in a much more flexible way and to provide a greater capacity for immediate action. Exercises of this type are crucial for the North Atlantic Alliance, as they allow it to exercise the ability to move a significant number of troops, as well as equipment, in Europe and across the Atlantic, which translates to testing of procedures and multidirectional skills by the military. It is also particularly important that, at the same time, exercises constitute a demonstration of the common objectives of the member countries. The exercise of the deployment of American and NATO forces, the largest in the last 30 years, shows the durability of the trans-

atlantic bond and is an invaluable motivation for the NATO members to update the knowledge necessary in this area, which is strengthened by the enormous logistical potential. It should be noted that military exercises are necessary, but they never diametrically improve the options of response. Nonetheless, such events illustrate to a large extent that the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation member countries are able to rise to the challenge and react in time. The exercised practices will also greatly help the members of the Alliance to prepare for supporting, as well as receiving, NATO forces on a large scale. It should be emphasised that the large-scale military exercises conducted by NATO troops counterbalance the Russian Federation and its regime<sup>14</sup>.

NATO countries do not always speak with one voice, a specific example of which is the Greek-Turkish conflict. Both countries are applying for and seeking aviation and maritime rights in the Aegean Sea, which is rich in oil and minerals. Turkish F-16 fighters repeatedly violated Greek airspace, thus leading to the cancellation of Turkey's participation in the NATO air force exercises "Tiger Meet", organized by Athens this year, planned for 9 May 2022. More than 20 years ago, this dispute would have led to war. However, thanks to the intervention of the United States, the armed conflict has been avoided<sup>15</sup>.

NATO exercises "Tiger Meet" are joint exercises of the NATO air forces, the main

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/pl/index.html>, [16.04.2022].

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/articles/list/defender-2020-5/>, [16.04.2022].

<sup>15</sup> More: Współczesne postrzeganie bezpieczeństwa, K. Jałoszyński, B. Wiśniewski, T. Wojtuszek (eds.), WSA, Bielsko – Biała 2007; A. Adamczyk, Konflikty na morzu Egejskim – otwarta puszcza Pandory w stosunkach Grecko – Turckich, „Roczniki Nauk Społecznych”, 10/3/2018, Warszawa 2018.

aim of which is to improve cooperation in the field of performed activities. It should be emphasized that only planes of units with the symbol of a tiger or a puma in their emblem take part in the exercises. The meeting was held for the first time on the territory of Poland in the period from 14 to 28 May 2018. The event was hosted by the 6th Air Force Squadron, and the exercises were carried out mostly in the 31st Tactical Aviation Base, as well as in the 21st Tactical Aviation Base in Świdnin, the Transport Aviation Base in Powidz, the 22nd Tactical Aviation Base in Malbork and the 12th Airport Headquarters in Miroslawiec. As part of the event, more than 2 thousand soldiers took part in the exercises, coming from: Poland, the Czech Republic, Greece, Great Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Italy, Belgium, Turkey and Hungary, using approx. 70 air machines<sup>16</sup>.

## Common foreign and security policy of the EU

The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) is an integral part of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy. It is a guarantor of the development of the military and civilian capabilities of the entire European Union, as well as its individual Member States, which allows the European Union to manage external crises effectively and completely. Cooperation in this area allows for a quick response to existing threats, and at the same time ensures consistency with other activities of the EU. Poland strongly advocates and calls for an increase in the importance of the European Union in

the global context, and also is in support of the strengthening of the CSDP. As the research shows, Poles perceive these activities as a necessary complement to the previous activities carried out within the NATO structure. Poland is actively and effectively involved in military activities within the CSDP structure. This should be understood as, among others, permanent structural cooperation of the EU in the area of development of defence capabilities, transfer of forces to Battle Groups, as well as participation in all EU operations<sup>17</sup>.

Permanent Structured Cooperation, PESCO is a treaty instrument according to which the vast majority of 25 out of 27 Member States have committed themselves to additional actions to strengthen defence and strengthen cooperation. Key decisions such as the launch of PESCO, the expansion of structures to include more Member States, or the removal of one of the existing members are always taken by a qualified majority. The latter usually occurs at the time of a Member State's failure to comply with its obligations. Other decisions concerning, among other, initiation and management of new projects are taken unanimously. Undoubtedly, a practical reflection of an opportunity for PESCO to function smoothly is the continuous implementation of projects aimed at increasing the defence capabilities of the Member States. As part of PESCO, approx. 50 projects were initiated, e.g., in the field of efficient industrial cooperation and mutual use of resources held by the Member States. Responsibility for the way in which a project is financed

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.natotigers.org/>, [17.04.2022].

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/index\\_en.htm](http://www.eeas.europa.eu/csdp/index_en.htm), [18.04.2022].

and managed is always fully vested in the participating Member States. If a State is granted an observer status for a project, it shall not have the right to speak on the possibility of its development and shall not cover the costs of financing it<sup>18</sup>.

Poland currently participates in 12 PESCO projects, including coordination over one of them. This project is the Medical Training Center for the needs of Special Forces. Hungary is also actively involved in the project, while France, Spain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Ireland have observer status. Poland also has an observer status in 12 other projects. The remaining 11 projects in which Poland actively participates are listed below:

- Military Mobility;
- Network of Logistic Hubs in Europe and Support to Operations;
- Maritime Semi-Autonomous Mine Counter Measures – MAS MCM;
- Harbour and Maritime Surveillance and Protection – HARMSPRO;
- Integrated Unmanned Ground Systems – IUGS;
- European Medical Command;
- European Secure Software defined Radio;
- Integrated European Joint Training and Simulation Centre – EUROSIM;
- Rapid Response Teams and Mutual Assistance in Cyber Security;
- EU Radionavigation Solution – EURAS;
- EU Collaborative Warfare Capabilities – ECoWAR<sup>19</sup>.

## Development of defence capabilities in the European Union

On 1 May 2004, Poland became a full member of the European Union under the Accession Treaty signed in Athens on 16 April 2003. However, the Polish Armed Forces had already participated in the UEFOR Concordia peace-keeping operation in Macedonia in 2003. Poland has continued its support for the security of the Balkans, since 2004 participating in the EUFOR Althea military operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, replacing the activities of the NATO SFOR mission. It is particularly noteworthy that the opportunity for action and operational involvement extends beyond the geographically proximate regions of the state. Between 2015 and 2020, Poland participated in the European Union naval operation entitled EUNAVFOR med SOPHIA in the Mediterranean Sea<sup>20</sup>. The main objective of the operation was to combat organised criminal groups involved in the transport of illegal migrants to Europe. This commitment is still continued by Poland as from 1 April 2020 for a new operation entitled EU EUNAVFOR MED. IRINI. The operation is largely based on the execution of the arms embargo on Libya. Poland also delegates its officers to, i.a., the command of the EUNAVFOR Atalanta naval operation to combat piracy off the Horn of Africa, and to the command of the EUTM RCA

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.pesco.europa.eu/>, [18.04.2022].

<sup>19</sup> [http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/structures-instruments-agencies/european-security-defence-college/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/csdp/structures-instruments-agencies/european-security-defence-college/index_en.htm), [19.04.2022].

<sup>20</sup> R. Podgórzńska, *Udział Polski w operacjach pokojowych Unii Europejskiej. Dylematy i wyzwania*, „Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego. Acta Politica”, Szczecin 2015, p. 29.



military advisory and training operation in the Central African Republic<sup>21</sup>.

Moreover, the Polish military contingent participated in 2013-2014 in the European Union training mission in Mali – EUTM Mali, while in 2014-2015 supporting UN operations in the military operation in the Central African Republic – EUFOR CAR. Poland has for years been involved in participating in operations taking place on the African continent. The state participated, i. a. in 2006 in the EUFOR RD Congo mission and in 2008 in the EUFOR Tchad/RCA mission. In both cases, the Polish contingents were among the largest<sup>22</sup>.

For years, Poland has been strongly involved in the organization of Battlegroups. These are rapid response units which enable the European Union to take immediate action in crisis situations outside its territory. In 2010, Poland was the framework state of a Battlegroup. It was created together with Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania and Germany. Poland was then responsible for the command of the group's forces and combat element<sup>23</sup>. In 2013, the Weimar Combat Group was the unit responsible for rapid response in crisis situations<sup>24</sup>. It was established by the Polish forces in cooperation with the German and French forces. In this case,

Poland was also responsible for coordinating its preparations and the opportunity to function.<sup>25</sup> In 2016 and 2019, the Visegrad Battle Group was on duty. It included Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic. It was joined by Ukraine in 2016 and Croatia in 2019. In both cases, Poland acted as a framework state, appointing a majority of its forces, as well as the Operation Command<sup>26</sup>.

The outbreak of war in Ukraine has shown how important is the fact of affiliation to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which is a protective umbrella and guarantees security against the attack which Russia carried out in Ukraine. The ruling president of Russia styles himself a tsar and aims at taking over as much of the territory as possible in order to extend his influence.

The Georgian-Russian war exposed Russian threats. President Lech Kaczyński said at a rally in Tbilisi on August 12, 2008: “For the first time in a long time, our neighbours from the north, for us also from the north, from the east, showed the face that we have known for hundreds of years. These neighbours believe that the nations around them should be subject to them. We say no. This country is Russia. This country believes that the old days of the fallen empire, less than 20 years ago, are coming back. That again domination will be a feature of this region. It will not! Those times are over once and for all (..) And we also know very well that today Georgia, tomorrow Ukraine, the day after tomorrow the Baltic states, and then maybe it's time for my country, for Poland!”

<sup>21</sup> More: B. Przybylska – Maszner, *Udział Polski w operacjach wojskowych Unii Europejskiej w Afryce*, *Przegląd Politologiczny*, 3/2016, Poznań 2016.

<sup>22</sup> Council Decision 2014/73/CFSP of 10 February 2014 on a European Union military operation in the Central African Republic (EUFOR RCA).

<sup>23</sup> W. Wątor, *Grupy Bojowe Unii Europejskiej. Istota, bilans funkcjonowania, perspektywy*, „*Studia Politicae Universitatis Silesiensis*”, 21/2018, Warszawa 2018.

<sup>24</sup> More: B. Kogut, P. Lubiewski, *Organization of Rescue Activities in Crisis Situations Caused by Terrorist Attacks*, “*Bulletin of Lviv State University of Life Safety*”, 2018/17, pp. 74-82.

<sup>25</sup> Council of The European Union: *EU Battlegroup Preparation Guide (12904/2/08)*. Brussels 2008.

<sup>26</sup> [https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/area/foreign-affairs\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/area/foreign-affairs_en), [21.04.2022].

Speaking about the neighbours from the “north for us”, the president recalled the threat posed by the fact that Poland borders with Kaliningrad, which is a bridgehead for the Russian army ready to attack. It is from Kaliningrad that Russian troops can set off against Poland<sup>27</sup>.

On 10 April 2010 President Lech Kaczyński together with 95 people who held the most important positions in the Republic of Poland died in the plane crash near Smolensk in Russia. To this day, speculation continues about the causes of this huge tragedy. Many people doubt that there was an assassination, but there is a lack of hard evidence to support this thesis<sup>28</sup>.

The territory of Poland was changing with time, and this fact had a huge impact on today’s opinion of the Poles on the neighbouring countries. The relationship between Poland and the Ukrainian territories contributed to the heroic attitude of Polish citizens towards the Ukrainians, with whom they fought a ferocious fight a hundred years ago. Earlier prejudices and reluctance gave way, and solidarity and brotherhood of nations ensued. The last century of Poland shows huge mental, social, political and material divisions. The more the Polish Nation is under threat, the more it is in solidarity. In a sense of danger, Poles became heroes and fought for a better tomorrow for future generations. Taking on the burden of reorganizing the life of Ukrainian refugees, Poland relieved oth-

er European countries in a significant way. Feeling the need deep in their heart, Polish citizens provide humanitarian aid of the highest quality. They welcome the needy and “pro bono” organize collections and help points. A secure Europe is a strong Europe that opposes aggression and lawlessness with one voice. At the moment, the Russian Federation is clearly threatening Ukraine’s allies with the use of a nuclear bomb. In this situation, prudence and appropriate diplomacy must dominate the dialogue with the aggressor.

The current Polish policy is in line with the European Union’s guidelines on limiting Russia’s expansion. The most important laws that have recently appeared in the Journal of Laws are:

- Journal of Laws 2022, item 835  
Act of April 13, 2022, on special solutions in the field of counteracting support for aggression against Ukraine and aimed at protecting national security. As we learn from Art. 1. the Act aims to counteract supporting the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which took place on February 24 this year [Polish Journal of Laws] The Act excludes Russian contractors from tenders and public competitions in accordance with the EU ban, which is a part of the fifth set of economic sanctions against Russia<sup>29</sup>.
- Journal of Laws of March 23, 2022, item. 655  
The Act of March 11, 2022, on the Defense of the Homeland regulates

<sup>27</sup> <https://publica.pl/teksty/jestesmy-tu-razem-50926.html>, [22.04.2022].

<sup>28</sup> More: Matthew Day, Smolensk air disaster ‘was caused by mystery explosion’. „The Telegraph”, 10/04/2014. Telegraph Media Group, London 2014.

<sup>29</sup> Ustawa z dnia 13 kwietnia 2022 r. o szczególnych rozwiązaniach w zakresie przeciwdziałania wspieraniu agresji na Ukrainę oraz służących ochronie bezpieczeństwa narodowego, Dz.U. 2022 poz. 835.

issues related to defense, military service, financing the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, and implementing by entrepreneurs of tasks in favor of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. In addition, it regulates issues related to the organization and composition of the Armed Forces and bodies competent in matters of state defense and their tasks. (Footnote: sejm.gov.pl) The Act increases the financing of the state's defense from 2.2 percent of the GDP to a minimum of 3 percent of the GDP from 2023. From the law we also learn that volunteers perform basic military service voluntarily for a period of 12 months. The military training program has been extended in the schools of the Academic Legion. The act aims to increase the number of Polish soldiers to approx. 300 thousand. Of which 50 thousand are to be soldiers of the Territorial Defense Forces<sup>30</sup>.

- On 14 March 2022, the National Health Fund issued 5 announcements regulating the issues of access of Ukrainian citizens to the public health care system. Every Ukrainian citizen who has been legally residing in Poland since 24 February 2022 has access to the system. The National Health Fund covers the costs of all medical services. This applies both to citizens of Ukraine and their spouses who do not have Ukrainian citizenship, as well as to persons holding a Polish Card who did not have

to cross the Polish border directly with Ukraine<sup>31</sup>.

The eyes of the whole world are focused on military operations on the territory of Ukraine. However, it must not be forgotten what is happening on Poland's eastern border. Belarus plays in one orchestra with Vladimir Putin spreading lawlessness and disinformation. The Belarusian regime is creating a migration crisis<sup>32</sup> aimed at destabilising the political situation of the European Union. Illegal migrants from the Middle East were brought to Minsk, and from there they were transported to the border of Poland and the EU. This procedure was supported by the Belarusian services. The Polish Border Guard is exposed to aggression from Belarusian soldiers and foreigners who are forcing their way across the border in order to illegally cross it.

Poland is helping the citizens of Ukraine unconditionally as much as it can, which, in the context of illegal migration from the Middle East, raises moral dilemmas and questions about the segregation of people who need help. However, a significant difference here is the source of these problems. The origins of aid for Ukrainian citizens are connected with the actions of the Russian aggressor, whose ruthlessness and deception reached their zenith. Migrants from the Middle East are

<sup>30</sup> Ustawa z dnia 11 marca 2022 r. o obronie Ojczyzny, Dz.U. 2022 poz. 655.

<sup>31</sup> Ustawa z dnia 12 marca 2022 r. o pomocy obywatelom Ukrainy w związku z konfliktem zbrojnym na terytorium tego państwa, Dz.U. 2022 poz. 583.

<sup>32</sup> More: P. Lubiewski, Ukryty wymiar imigracji a prawa człowieka – konsekwencje dla bezpieczeństwa publicznego, [w:] Wiśniewski B., Czupryński A., Gikiewicz M., (red.), Racjonalizacja zarządzania jednolitymi formacjami umundurowanymi odpowiedzialnymi za Bezpieczeństwo wewnętrzne, Tom VI, Szkoła Główna Służby Pożarniczej, Warszawa 2020, pp. 24-37.

a problem artificially created for the needs of the Belarusian regime.

## Summary

Safety is one of the basic human needs. It should be understood that in order to be able to function properly and develop, a person needs appropriate conditions. One of the primary conditions is the guarantee of security, both looking through the prism of the individual and the general public. One of the main tasks of the state is to ensure the safety of its citizens. Assuming that a safe state is a safe citizen, it should be emphasized that the main guarantor of security is therefore a strong, stable and well-organised state, and citizens who are aware of the responsibility for this security.

Over the last century, Poland underwent a remarkable transformation in the military field. Every country needs a strong ally to increase its security on the international arena. At the moment of Poland's accession to NATO in 1999, the members of the Alliance became its allies, and the strongest link of this Alliance are the United States of America. Cooperation in this field provides Poland with a guarantee of border protection.

At a time when the Russian Federation is attacking Ukraine with impunity and pursuing an aggressive policy, Europe needs maneuvers such as Defender Europe 22. The aim of this project is to ensure a balance of power considering Russia's actions, and to demonstrate on the international stage that NATO has enormous military potential that can be used in any situation that demands it. The essence of maneuvers is to acquire the

ability of allies to maneuver as quickly as possible and move military forces to places that require their presence. In this area, transport capacity, infrastructure, effective command and communication, as well as special diplomatic authorisations that facilitate border crossings are vital.

Poland actively participates in many projects aimed at developing the military crisis response capabilities of the European Union, including the work of the European Defence Agency – EDA. Its main objectives are to regulate the development of all defence capabilities of the Member States and to maximise the effectiveness of the collective application of measures in order to increase the intended effects during the operation. Poland is a part of multinational scientific and research projects. The participation of the state in achieving the desired standards and special requirements allows for their smooth implementation in state projects.

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