
by Vera-Karin Brazova

Bringing together distinguished Polish scholars and researchers, the book *Poland’s Security: Contemporary Domestic and International Issues* presents different aspects of security of present-day Poland. The volume’s primary intent is to “emphasize the complex, multi-faceted, dynamic, and evolutionary nature of the subject, the multiplicity of problems in the area of security, and the diversity of its determinants” (p. 9). Attention is paid not only to the military (or “hard”) security, but also to other sectors, such as economic, societal or energy security. A specific gap, which the editors set out to cover, is the scarcity of a practical application of theoretical considerations in the respective field.

The book consists of 11 chapters, first promoting a comprehensive approach in Sebastian Wojciechowski’s introductory chapter, then paying attention to what could be understood as military and political sectors of security¹ in the first half of the book. The second half is then devoted to security in its wider sense, covering organized crime, economic, energy and societal security and concluding with the relatively newly emerging topic of data communications security. As the editor notes at the very beginning, the list of aspects covered is not exhaustive (p. 9), yet it can be maintained that all crucial aspects of security are covered by the particular chapters.

The first chapter seeks to provide a comprehensive overview of *Poland’s security in the Years 2010–2011*. For this purpose, five sectors of security are selected. While referring here to the Copenhagen School, the actual factors selected for the analysis do not entirely correspond with the original understanding of the security sectors² In order to satisfy the outlined goals, the striving for practical utilization and measurement is here clearly preferred to the theoretical conceptualization of the factors measured. Hence, the threat of terrorism (representing here the military sector) is analyzed based on the number of terrorist attacks worldwide and on the results of public opinion surveys conducted in Poland. In the ecological sector, the condition of the

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² Ibidem.
natural environment is evaluated based on “the percentage of the population using municipal wastewater treatment plants” (p. 17), etc. Combining all these dimensions together, the author comes to the conclusion that “Poland’s level of security in 2011 was lower than it was in 2010” (p. 21) yet the validity of such a statement is rather dubious.

The coverage of the military sector starts with Chapter 2, where The Culture of National Security and the Transformation in Polish Security Policy is addressed, starting with an explanation of historical roots of the current security culture in Poland. The willingness to use military force is discussed, as well as the country’s participation in – and attitude to security institutions such as the OSCE, NATO and the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy. As a specific challenge to the national security culture, the terrorist attack on the USA in 2001 is identified and the impact thereof upon the Polish security culture is addressed. On reading the chapter, one gains a better understanding of the Polish perception of security threats as well as of national political debate on security issues.

In a logical continuation, Chapter 3 deals with Poland’s involvement in NATO and the EU Peacekeeping Operations. The history of the country’s participation in UN peacekeeping missions is outlined, as well as its military participation in Iraq and Afghanistan. The chapter touches upon the concept of Responsibility to Protect, yet it does so rather implicitly and not in a consistent manner. Despite the title, the chapter does not cover Polish participation in EU peacekeeping missions, although the country has participated in the Concordia, Althea or EUFOR RD Congo missions to name just a few. The author’s claim that the EU “finds it very difficult to specify its common foreign and security policy” (p. 46) might well hold true in some cases, yet one could consider the illustrative example of former Yugoslavia rather outdated, especially taking into account that it was particularly this crisis which triggered developments towards a stronger defence identity of the EU in general and towards CSDP in particular.

The following chapter Asymmetric Threats and the Security of Poland provides an explanation of the concept of asymmetric threats as well as an extensive introduction into the problematic of terrorism, including various influential definitions and an overview of the development of the phenomenon as such. The author goes on enumerating groups currently cooperating with the Global Salafi Jihad Movement in the world. Besides terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is presented as an asym-

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metric threat, especially when linked with terrorism. Further, transnational organized crime is mentioned, including the “exchange of organizational patterns between terrorist groups and criminal groups” (p. 75) as well as the cyber – or info-terrorism. Concluding from the Polish perspective, terrorism is presented as a threat both directly – as a revenge for secret prisons organized in Poland by the CIA; and indirectly – linking the issue with the narcotics trade “dominated by criminals from the former Yugoslavia, Middle East, and former Soviet republics of the Caucasus region” (p. 77).

The subsequent chapter on the Institutionalization of Internal Security in Poland also touches upon terrorism when discussing the country’s crisis management. The reader is confronted with a definition of a security system as it is understood in Poland. With respect to this, the document National Security Strategy is analyzed and the structure and responsibilities in the Polish crisis management are presented. In this regard, the chapter is highly informative both on Polish security systems in general; and on crisis management in particular. Somewhat surprising might be the aforementioned focus on terrorism as a (potential) main threat to internal security compared to other (especially natural) disasters that the country is regularly facing.

The sixth chapter Poland’s Security Policy – Military Aspects deals again with the military dimension. At the beginning, the term security is defined and different perspectives are presented from which military security can be analyzed. The problematic is, further on, framed by the international context of alliances and security environment, including general challenges that NATO (as an organization of collective defence) is recently facing. The chapter illuminates the role of the accession to NATO for Poland, showing very particular impacts in all domains of Polish military security. Discussion is here also devoted to more recent developments, such as evolution of the negotiations and implementation of the (formerly American, later NATO) missile defense system. In the part devoted to the military, important programs are presented to the reader, as well as key political decisions and operations. Although slightly overlapping with some of the previous chapters, one gets here a holistic perspective of the development in the Polish military system.

Legal Aspects of Combating Organized Crime in Poland is the title of the subsequent chapter. Firstly, organized crime is defined, including historical developments of the definition. Followingly, practical and legal approaches to define organized crime are presented. The chapter goes on

comparing and contrasting Polish law with European legislation. The author analyses international agreements and European law. Consequently, the main institutions in the field (namely the Europol, Eurojust and Frontex) and their tasks are presented. Finally, the last part of the chapter is devoted to national institutions, to their role and relative importance.

The chapter on *Polish Economic Security* presents the respective threats and sketches out their potential consequences. The nature of economic security is first described, being understood as a “foundation of national security” (p. 138). Also here, various definitions are presented, as well as different aspects, types and dimensions of economic security. Three national documents are analyzed with respect to economic security – namely s National Internal Security, the Foresight National Programme Polska 2020 and the National Security Strategy – implying the relatively large attention being paid to economic security in Poland. While the information provided on grounds of the analyzed documents is quite extensive, a broader discussion of conception of economic security in different documents is lacking.

The ninth chapter is on *EU Membership and Its Influence on Poland’s Energy Security*. The chapter starts with outlining definitions of energy security as provided by the UN, EU but also by Polish scholars such as Pawel Czerpak and Joanna May-urkiewicz. Following, the external dimension of energy security is presented, giving an overview of important documents at the EU level as well as of related milestone events. Particular points are stressed as especially relevant for Poland, such as the role of energy solidarity. As the main problem at EU level, the dependency on one supplier is identified. In particular, the Russian projects Nord and South Stream are presented as threatening the EU energy security, including the energy security of Poland. Regarding the internal dimension, the direction of Polish energy policy is shown based on documents Poland’s Energy Policy until 2025 and until 2030. The actual energy security of Poland is then analyzed based on selected factors such as the degree of diversification in supply or the technical condition of the supply system. A factor which remains largely unaddressed, however, is then the diversification of sources, especially the discussion of renewable energy resources as potentially contributing to energy security.

The chapter *Societal Security of Poland in the 21st Century* starts with explaining the theorizing of the Copenhagen School. The chapter further sketches out the migration history of Poland – regarding both emigration and immigration. The multicultural experiences of the 16th and 17th century is contrasted with one of the current culturally unitary state where Catholicism predominates. The problem
of societal security when facing immigration is here projected rather to the future and linked to the need of Polish authorities to “balance the deficit in generation renewal (…) by actively encouraging immigration” (p. 185). The current situation in Poland is compared to Germany, where the issue of integration was for a long time neglected. Indeed, the reader receives detailed information on Muslim/Turkish immigration to Germany, such as the size of an average Muslim household or the marrying age of Turkish women. The question arises, however, about the relevance of this data for the case of Poland where the prevailing majority of immigrants come from culturally more similar areas such as from the Ukraine.

The final chapter is devoted to *European Architecture of Data Communications Security*. The historical developments of computers and data communication networks are here introduced after which the concept of the information society is critically discussed. The author argues that the main source of threat is the nature of the net architecture itself and observes that the “vast majority of elements of data communication networks do not belong to states but are the property of the private sector” (p. 206). Also here, attention is paid to the asymmetrical threat of cyber-terrorism as used e.g. by the Tamil Tigers in 1998. Additionally, other concepts are introduced and discussed, such as activism and hacktivism. The chapter provides a useful and comprehensive overview of EU legislation and initiatives in the field of internet security. Poland’s stance to the issue, however, is not mentioned.

Overall, *Poland’s Security: Contemporary Domestic and International Issues* marks an important step in filling in the gap in English written literature on security issues of a non-English speaking country. On the other hand, the level of different chapters is quite uneven as if the authors did not share their perception of the volume’s target audience. E.g. while Chapter 2 provides an insightful analysis of the Polish national security culture, Chapter 4 is best suited for students or scholars searching for an introduction into the broad problematic of terrorism. Similarly, despite reader’s expectations, not all of the chapters actually touch the specific national (i.e. Polish) dimension. While especially the chapters devoted to military security and to the use of armed forces do concentrate on Poland, the chapters on asymmetric threats or societal security do so only very superficially and the last chapter misses this dimension completely. The book is thus in practice somewhat lacking a unifying theme according to which the readers could orientate themselves.

For scholars who wish to gain more insight into both Polish security and the Polish perception of security, the book is definitely worth reading. Yet, it is advisable to do so selectively, reaching out for chapters which really cover the topic.