

Maciej MAGIERA

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań
<http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9696-4810>

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Łukasz DONAJ

Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7720-1260>

A STRATEGIC REVIEW OF THE SECURITY OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES¹

In the year 2017, as for the previous years of the 21st century, the ongoing crisis trends of this century continued. As well as persistent economic hardship (regarding the euro, excessive indebtedness, the pauperization of society, etc.), two further major crises were consolidated. The first concerns illegal mass migration, namely the issue of EU member states having to handle a large immigrant population who find it difficult to adapt to their new environment, especially in terms of social attitudes and culture. The second comes from the use of force or the threat to use it, which, in a natural way, divides this review of the strategic security of European countries into two parts. In the first, analysis will focus on the states which were members of the European Union before the biggest enlargement in its history in 2004, and the main sources of risks, disputes and conflicts, which impair their sense of security, in the opinion of some Europeans, and are a consequence of mass migration. The poorly-implemented policy of multiculturalism has resulted in the radicalization of European societies, as exemplified by United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union, increased support for the political right (values, attitudes, norms, and customs) and extremism on both the right and the left of the European political scene. These fundamental political changes in stable Western European countries are manifested in the difficulties in establishing a federal government in Germany. After the elections in September 2017, the resulting political configuration did not allow Angela Merkel to create another (fourth) cabinet until March 14, 2018. Therefore, this strategic review of European countries does not focus on wars or armed conflicts, from which most of the examined countries are absent, but on the issue of escalating incidents and persistent terrorist acts stemming from social radicalization. The analysis in the second part concerns the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and the countries which complement the issue specified in the title of this paper, although not in the geographical sense (namely Cyprus and Malta, which joined the EU alongside CEE countries, and Kosovo, which is recognized by some countries).

¹ The work on this text was completed on May 1, 2018.

MEMBER STATES OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The year 2017 saw a continuation of the divergence in interpretations of the situation in Europe, in particular regarding how European and intercultural integration is understood, which first emerged in 2016. Geographically speaking, this division more or less matches the external borders of the EU in 2004 and, more interestingly, is in the place of ‘the iron curtain’ – the Cold War division into two opposing camps. The elections in Hungary in April 2018, when Fidesz maintained its supremacy (134/199 seats), indicate that this trend will continue. In the western camp, the idealistic belief in multiculturalism led to an axiological collision, which resulted in terrorist acts in 2017. However, it should be emphasized that the previous year was abundant in spectacular increases in certain kinds of crimes, some by several hundred percent. Some of these were of a strictly cultural, religious or ethnic nature. There is still a dispute, although frozen for the time being, between the main EU actors and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, over the unresolved issue of the relocation of migrants. In 2017, divisions between members of the Western camp, which had supposedly been overcome, resurfaced, as exemplified by the referendum in Catalonia and its political consequences. At this point, it is worth mentioning that the specific security policy pursued by President Donald Trump is not without consequences in the international arena. However, since 2016, and continuing throughout 2017, an upward trend of para-terrorist activity is clearly affecting the population of Western Europe.

Systematically categorizing terrorist acts or incidents of a terrorist character is quite a challenge given the current state of knowledge. It is difficult to clearly indicate the boundaries between what is terrorist in nature and what simply a common crime. In 2017, as in the previous year, there were several cases which cannot be unambiguously categorized. For the purpose of this analysis, motives will be the key criteria for qualifying what is terrorist in nature and what is not, and not the effects (material and human casualties). Therefore, breaking the window of a public institution by anarchists on October 8 in Athens is an example of a classical terrorist attack.

The following terrorist acts have been singled out from many (although minimally publicized) incidents in Europe, analyzed on the basis of at least two confirmed sources.² Local incidents were excluded that were not terrorist in nature, such as those committed by individuals with mental disorders, acts of racial hatred (anti-Semitism) etc. However, the upward trend in these kinds of incidents should be also emphasized (especially murders, rapes, beatings or acid attacks), especially in metropolitan areas, such as London, Paris, Berlin and so on. A murder or attempted murder by a migrant or Islamist follower or proponent cannot equal a terrorist act. The same holds true for a prohibited act preceded by shouting *God is Great*, because the shouting itself without any other connection does not confirm terrorist motives.

² The source material is based mainly on documents from entities which specialize in fighting terrorism, including Europol and Interpol. Moreover, the source credibility was backed by two independently prepared reports (one for less publicized incidents). Reference to tabloids, which are inherently predisposed towards sensationalism and thus characterized by emotional and subjective narratives, was under particular restriction. For the list of source materials see *References*.

In addition, this security review is based on acts which were carried out, and not on acts which were planned or foiled at the last moment. However, an act that was partially accomplished by a perpetrator is considered as a terrorist act. Thus, the attack on February 3, 2017, committed by a man with a knife was originally considered a common crime, but the investigation demonstrated that the perpetrator had wanted to destroy works of art in the Louvre as a symbol of European civilization, which allows this to qualify as an act of terrorism. On July 25, in the city of Melilla (Spain), an attacker with a knife attacked a policeman shouting *Allahu Akbar*; while these features of the attack were not synonymous with a terrorist attack, in the course of the investigation it turned out that this act did indeed have the characteristics of a terrorist attack. Thus, whether or not a person is a proponent of Islamism, an ideology derived from Islamic fundamentalism, has become an acid test. However, establishing the borderline is problematic: fascination with Islam (books at a perpetrator's home), loose connections with the radical Islamic environment, a formal connection with the so-called Islamic State (informal ISIS), or perhaps dispersed links with the Islamic State, or taking responsibility for an attack by the Islamic State, but without official evidence, is considered in investigations by European services. It should be stated that 16 cases of terrorist acts in 2017 resulted from nationalist extremism, represented by the Real IRA or neo-Nazi groups (Great Britain, Sweden, Germany), or anarchist groups (Greece) (compared with six such incidents in 2016). On January 5, 2017, a member of the Nordic Resistance Movement detonated a bomb opposite the Refugee Centre in Gothenburg. On January 9, a member of PASOK (the Panhellenic Socialist Movement) wounded a policeman in the center of Athens. On January 22, a member of the Real Irish Republican Army shot a policeman in Belfast, and on February 22, the same organization carried out a car bomb attack. On January 25, members of the terrorist organization Conspiracy of Fire Nuclei carried out six attacks in Athens by setting fire to symbolic institutions, such as a bank and a post office, and on March 16, they caused an explosion at the headquarters of the IMF in Paris. On May 25, they blew up the vehicle of the former Greek Prime Minister Lucas Papademos in a street in Athens, injuring him and the driver, and on December 22, they detonated a bomb in front of the main court in Athens. On February 21, a member of the Sinn Fein carried out a bomb attack using gasoline and a car. On April 5, in Bastia (Corsica) a member of the National Liberation Front of Corsica blew up the entrance to the French energy company EdF. On April 18, a Greek terrorist organization, the Revolutionary Struggle, detonated a small explosive at the entrance to Eurobank in Athens. On June 28, in Moss (Norway) right-wing extremists fired shots at a bus stop. On July 30, in Marseille (France) a left-wing extremist detonated a bomb in front of the building of a far-right monarchist organization, French Action. On October 8, in Athens members of the Rubicon group broke a window of the General Secretariat of the Information System (GSIS). On November 7, in Athens members of the Organization for Revolutionary Self-Defense attacked preventive units of the Greek police. On December 7, in Amsterdam (the Netherlands), a Palestinian nationalist attacked the window of a Jewish restaurant with a Palestinian flag. These attacks should be considered classical examples of terrorist attacks, although they did not have a cultural background but rather a political one.

Two attacks were foiled during their execution; the fast response of the police made it possible to nip the threat in the bud. For example, on June 19, at the Champs Elysees, it was possible to eliminate an assassin – a driver of a vehicle loaded with explosives. Another interesting example is the detention of a driver with a samurai sword on August 25, near Buckingham Palace, who turned out to be an ISIS enthusiast during the investigation. One case has been difficult to resolve until now, namely, on June 19, near Finsbury Park (London), a so-called ‘lone wolf’ (the source of the attack was islamophobia) attacked (non-white) passers-by using a vehicle in revenge for attacks by Islamic State.

The societies of Western Europe, especially during the last decade of the 20th century, were not used to the risk of terrorism. In fact, it is difficult to identify cases of recurrent use of force or physical violence on the territory of the European Union until 2005, inclusive of the post-Cold War period. However, we, as Europeans, regularly experience increasingly frequent terrorist acts and, unfortunately, 2017 was no exception to this trend.

On February 3, 2017, a ‘lone wolf’ attacker attacked a group of soldiers with a machete in front of the entry to the Louvre Museum, injuring one, and was shot by a French policeman. On March 18, a jihadist shot four French policemen at Orly, the Parisian airport. On March 22, an Islamic state-associated attacker hit passers-by with a car, some fatally, on the Westminster Bridge in London, although an investigation by the British services did not reveal active links with ISIS. On April 7, an Uzbek inspired by Islamic State carried out a vehicle attack and hit a dozen or so people, some fatally, in a street in the center of Stockholm. On April 20, a member of Islamic State shot, in one case fatally, at policemen on the Avenue of Champs Elysees. On May 22, at an Ariana Grande concert in Manchester, an ISIS member carried out a bomb attack, killing 22 people and wounding a further 512. On June 2, Islamic State carried out another vehicle attack on London Bridge, resulting in 48 casualties, including eight dead. On June 6, a ‘lone wolf’ associated with ISIS injured one person with a hammer in front of the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. On June 20, an Islamist ran into the Central Station in Brussels and detonated a small bomb there. On June 30, in Linz (Austria), an ISIS supporter stabbed an older woman due to his hatred of the Freedom Party of Austria. On July 28, an Islamist with a 28-cm knife wounded six people, one fatally, shouting *Allahu Akbar* at a supermarket in Hamburg. On August 9, an attacker using a vehicle rammed a group of soldiers in the suburbs of Paris. On August 17 and 18, a series of vehicle attacks took place in La Rambla Street in Barcelona and in Cambrils, in which about 150 people were hit, including 16 fatally. On August 18, in the center of Turku (Finland), an Islamist inspired by ISIS stabbed two people and injured eight seriously. On August 24, an Israeli jihadist stabbed and wounded a policeman at an Allah-Las concert in Warsaw. On August 25, in Brussels, a member of Islamic State lightly wounded two soldiers with a machete. On September 15, an improvised explosive exploded in West London, injuring 30 people. On the same day, in Paris, an Islamist praising Allah attacked a French soldier with a knife. On September 1, at the station in Marseille, an Islamist stabbed two women shouting *Allahu Akbar*. On December 31, an Islamist attacked a pedestrian with a knife at a Berlin subway station shouting: *Infidel!*

On another note, it should be mentioned that ongoing non-military independence conflicts are still smoldering in the western part of Europe, e.g. the separation of Catalonia, the Basque Country, Scotland, and the possibility of Northern Ireland staying in the EU by joining the Republic of Ireland.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

Analogously to the above, an attempt is made in this paper to single out incidents in CEE that could be classified as terrorist acts, or be the origin of an armed conflict or dispute, or an expression of such a conflict. Again, in order to create such a list, press materials, statistical data and publications and reports from analytical institutions have been used (links, publications etc. are not given for the sake of clarity of narrative – the full list is provided in *References*).

As indicated in the *Introduction* above, the area discussed in this analysis consists of: the Visegrad Group countries (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary), some of the post-Soviet countries (Russia,³ Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia), the countries formed after the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia and – partially recognized – Kosovo), and other Balkan countries (Albania, Bulgaria and Romania), as well as Cyprus and Malta. However, in such an extensive and diverse area, it is possible to separate several elements that may affect the security situation, both in 2018 and in subsequent years:

- the immigration crisis, which has caused both an increase in radical sentiments but is also a ‘source’ of people trafficking (including terrorists) and the smuggling of goods (including weapons subsequently used in attacks);
- the export of violent jihad; in particular, European citizens returning to their homelands from the ranks of Islamic State should be mentioned in this context;
- the ongoing armed conflict in eastern Ukraine (and its implications, e.g. a series of political assassinations);
- the so-called frozen conflicts, which either have already acquired the characteristics of an international conflict or may – when several conditions are met – become wider conflicts (Transnistria, the situation in the Balkans, especially between Serbia and Kosovo).

When referring to the above, the following events should be mentioned in greater detail. In the case of **Poland**, in 2017 there were several cases that could have been hastily classified as terrorist acts (though later findings indicated that they were in fact acts of a ‘common’ criminal nature). These acts, including those of an extremist nature, were mainly acts of hooliganism. Once again, the assumption made in *The Report on Security in Poland for 2015* (this Report was developed on the basis of analysis from e.g. the Ministry of the Interior and Administration, the General Police Headquarters and the Agency of Internal Security) was confirmed and practically repeated in *The*

³ In the case of the Russian Federation, activities related to its involvement in European countries and the civil war in Syria are only discussed (especially in the context of the threat of former Islamic State fighters returning to their homelands).

Report for 2016, namely: “Both extreme-left and extreme-right organizations created hit squads used to conduct ideologically motivated attacks and fight against opposing organizations” (*Raport, 2015*). Furthermore, “an important problem in combating hate crimes is the low rate of reporting of such crimes to law enforcement agencies” (*ibid.*). It should be emphasized, however, that this factor may be distorting our perception of reality, because, as the statistical data of the “Never More” Association proves, the problem of violence motivated by racism or xenophobia in Poland is growing (*Ekstremizm w Polsce, 2018*). Regarding the threat of terrorism, *The Report for 2016* demonstrated that: “Despite the increased threat of terrorist attacks in the world, including in some Western European countries, and Poland’s involvement in operations under international anti-terrorist coalitions, the terrorist threat in Poland remained at a relatively low level in 2016. As in the previous years, Poland remained only a reserve target for possible terrorist attacks. However, the determination of Islamic terrorists to attack targets in the European Union indicates the continuing threat to Europe by Islamic extremists and may also affect the security situation in Poland. [...] A factor which may in the future result in attempts to undertake terrorist activities in Poland is the fact that people from high risk countries and regions are staying in our country. Moreover, it should be pointed out that the geopolitical location of Poland and legal conditions resulting from its membership of the European Union, including membership of the Schengen area, mean that Poland can play the role of a transit country for citizens of the increased-risk states on their way to Western and Northern Europe, or on their way back to their country of origin. European citizens who have been terrorist fighters in other countries may try to get into conflict areas or return from them through the territory of our country” (*Raport, 2016*). These trends continued throughout 2017. In the Czech Republic, no terrorist activities were recorded in 2017, but this country (as well as several other European countries) is most often mentioned in the context of discussions on relocation and immigration quotas. The same applies to Slovakia and Hungary (traditionally the loudest protesters against relocation, even creating voluntary border services to help the police and the military to seal the borders against migrants). On the one hand, such actions may be considered in the context of populist activities aimed at increasing the popularity of certain political parties, but on the other, it should be remembered that it was at the Hungarian-Serbian border that two young women wanted by European arrest warrants for terrorism-related activities were detained. It is interesting to note their direction of travel – not to, but from Europe. They wanted to go through Sofia to Damascus, to Islamic State-occupied territory.

Two factors clashed in the post-Yugoslav states: firstly, the aforementioned issues related to the immigration crisis; secondly, conflicts from previous years that remain unresolved. The former are mainly connected with the fact that closing the borders in south-eastern Europe has created a demand for organized crime to offer services to immigrants at various stages of their journeys to the European Union. In addition, this route and citizens of the countries in question are often indicated as an important link in the smuggling of weapons, or as potential targets for recruiters for terrorist groups. The latter group of factors includes conflicts – mainly of an ethnic character, especially: Serbs vs. Albanians (Serbia, Kosovo – in this context, the murder of Oliver Ivanovic, one of the few moderate Serbian politicians in Kosovo), Macedonians vs.

Albanians (Albania), Serbs vs. Bosnians (Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina) but also Croatia vs. Slovenia (border dispute), etc. Add to the mix the ongoing investigation to determine whether or not the attempted coup on the day of the parliamentary elections in Montenegro in October 2016 was inspired by Russian nationalist circles – this region may once again appear as the proverbial ‘Balkan powder keg’ which under ‘favorable’ conditions may be set on fire. Even a non-terrorist incident such as, for example, the throwing of a grenade into the US embassy in Podgorica by a veteran of the Kosovo war, may become a detonator (the bomber then blew himself up and the prosecutor’s office informed the public that, from the information gathered, including a farewell letter, it does not appear to be a terrorist act). Problems resulting from ethnic conflicts or in the aftermath of the immigration crisis have not spared the other Balkan states, i.e. **Albania, Bulgaria and Romania**. Therefore, they are – again – hotspots for the smuggling of weapons, people and the recruitment of volunteers to reinforce the ranks of terrorists. However, one more point should be made: in the case of Bulgaria, last year, for the first time, it was clearly indicated in the report on state security that: “Russia’s actions are the source of instability in the region. [...] Security challenges are growing, mainly in the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea regions and in the Eastern Mediterranean, where Russia is increasing its military potential and is intensifying military operations. Furthermore, the persistent conflicts on the periphery of the European continent and in the neighboring regions are becoming sources of permanent instability” (*Bulgaria: działania ...*). The region should be prepared for one more factor that may destabilize the situation: possible attacks by citizens returning from Iraq and Syria, where they had been fighting for Islamic State. This threat was also indicated in the report prepared by the Kosovan authorities (*Raport: Kosowo, 2018*) but similar trends were noticed by other international and local security agencies. The Russian authorities have spoken and still speak in a similar tone, which will be discussed below.

The post-Soviet area is indeed diverse (some countries belong to the NATO security structures, etc.), but it is relatively easy to single out the main source of threat, namely Russia. Whether or not it is a real threat or (in some cases) a contrived threat serving domestic politics is an open question. The year 2017 was another year in which the increased activity of hacker attacks on the energy networks in the Baltic states (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia) was noted. For example, in the National Security Risk Report in 2017, Lithuania stated that in April of the previous year, hackers had carried out serious DDoS attacks (distributed denial-of-service) against state ministries and institutions, the Vilnius airport or the media. “A significant proportion of the attacks carried out last year against the state sector in Lithuania was associated with Russian special services,” the report stated, but no details were provided (*Hakerzy atakują, 2017*).

Belarus is another country that may have problems resulting from illegal migration, but of a dual nature. It will involve people of Chechen origin who are trying to enter Poland, and also the presence in Belarus of people who had participated in armed activities in the conflict zone in Ukraine (including Belarusian citizens). However, for Aleksandr Lukashenko’s regime it was probably more important to deal with possible internal opposition by using external threats brazenly. On March 21, President Lukashenko announced that Belarus had managed to prevent armed provocations planned by ‘hit squads’ financed by the West, which dealt in the military training of the op-

position's 'fifth column.' On the same day, two former activists of the White Legion were detained. The state media began an information campaign about alleged planned provocations and preparations to initiate mass riots, and the subsequent arrests were accompanied by announcements that suspect goods such as weapon stores had been found. The President's newspaper wrote that, in fact, the White Legion had not ceased their subversive activities and continued the military training of their members to prepare for participation in armed operations in Belarus. The White Legion members were charged with offenses under Article 287 of the Penal Code of Belarus (creating an illegal armed formation). Importantly, at the end of the year this criminal case was discontinued (*Białoruskie władze*, 2017; *Oskarżani o*, 2017).

As has been demonstrated, there are plenty of areas in Europe that could be potential sources of wars or conflicts. These include **Moldova** (especially **Transnistria**, which has been the site of a so-called frozen conflict for several years).

Since April 2014, **the conflict in eastern Ukraine** has been ongoing (the so-called war in Donbas). It is not the subject of this paper to describe the causes and cover this conflict, hence we will limit ourselves only to a brief description of the present situation. Four years after the outbreak of war, and three years after the Minsk Protocol which froze the situation on the front, there is growing impatience amongst the public in Ukraine, as well as opposition to the policies of the government, who are accused of benefiting from the ongoing situation of 'neither war nor peace.' Perhaps this was the determining factor in the change in tactics of the Ukrainian authorities. President Petro Poroshenko stated (April 2018): "We are beginning a military operation under the direction of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in order to defend the territorial unity, sovereignty and independence of our country. Although the ATO [antiterrorist operation] has ended, opposition to the Russian aggressor will end only when the last grain of the Ukrainian soil is liberated – both in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions, as well as in the occupied territory of Crimea" (*Koniec ATO*, 2018). The change in the Donbas operation is the result of the adoption by the parliament in January of the Donbas Reintegration Law. It stated, among other things, that Russia occupies areas in the Luhansk and Donetsk regions with the help of armed groups consisting of regular troops, advisers, instructors, illegal armed groups, armed gangs and mercenaries. Ukraine has confirmed in this document its commitment to a peaceful settlement of the conflict on the basis of international law. However, the Donbas Reintegration Law emphasized the right to self-defense as provided for in the United Nations Charter. It is also enshrined in the Law that Ukraine is not responsible for Russia's actions in the occupied territories. After the Ukrainian parliament adopted the Law, the Kremlin spoke out against it. The Kremlin spokesman, Dmitry Peskov, declared that it could "affect [the prospects for regulating the situation in eastern Ukraine] in the most negative way." President Vladimir Putin's spokesman also underlined that Russia does not agree with the wording of the Law which defines Russia as a party in the conflict, and considers this to be in conflict with the Minsk Agreements (*ibid.*).

The annexation of Crimea and the so-called war in Donbas have led on to other incidents, including the following:

- increasingly frequent cyberattacks (causing e.g. power cuts in Kiev; attacks on the IT systems of the government, banks etc.);

- attempts to destabilize transportation systems (e.g. telephone alerts about planting a bomb, which caused the paralysis of several important metro stations in Kiev);
- murders and assassinations (mainly in Ukraine but also in Russia) with probable political motivations (this is most likely, although it is difficult to make firm judgements given the ongoing information war between Russia and Ukraine): the attempted assassination of Oleksiy Honcharenko, a deputy from President Poroshenko's Bloc (foiled); the assassination of a Colonel of the Security Service of Ukraine, Oleksandr Kharaberush (he died); the attempted assassination Alexander Timofeyev, Minister of the Self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic (seriously wounded); the assassination of Evgeny Zhilin, the leader of the *Oplot* pro-Russian forces and organizer of the fight against Ukrainian government forces in Donbas (shot dead); the assassination of Arsen Pavlov (alias Motorola), the Russian fighter who, in interviews, boasted about killing at least 15 Ukrainian soldiers (he died); the assassination of Colonel Maksim Shapoval, the officer of the Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine Intelligence Service (he died); the murder of Denis Voronenko, a former deputy of the Russian State Duma, who since October 2016 had lived in Ukraine, and since December had had Ukrainian citizenship; the murder of Georgian citizen Timur Makhauri, a former member of the Chechen voluntary battalion who had fought alongside Ukrainian forces against pro-Russian separatists in Donbas; the assassination of Adam Osmayev and his wife Amina Okuyeva (Osmayev was accused by Russia of planning an assassination attempt against Vladimir Putin – they survived the attack, but a few months later there was another assassination attempt which killed Okuyeva).

The following incidents should also be mentioned: 1. the blowing up of an OSCE car in Donbas, in April – the vehicle drove over a mine in the area occupied by Russian separatists and an American mission observer died as a result of the explosion; 2. the explosion at the US embassy in Kiev (the American communiqué said: “there was an incident involving a small explosive load” and it was not treated as a terrorist act, although the Ukrainian authorities immediately recognized it as such) (*Wybuch, 2018*); and 3. firing at the headquarters of the Polish Consulate in Lutsk with a grenade launcher in March.

Ukraine and Moldova are not the only countries that are in the immediate sphere of Russian interests. The conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia is another example of a so-called frozen conflict, which – if appropriately ‘played out’ by the Russian Federation – may increase its influence throughout the South Caucasus at the expense of other players, especially Turkey and the West.

In addition, in the security policy of Russia, especially in the context of terrorism (in the broadest sense of the term), one can distinguish the increasing threat from jihadists. In particular, two attacks that took place in Saint Petersburg contributed to this. On April 3, in the afternoon, 23-year-old Akbarzhon Jalilov from Kyrgyzstan detonated an explosive on an underground train in Saint Petersburg. The explosion took place between the Sennaya Ploshchad and Tekhnologichesky Institut stations. As a result of the attack, 11 people were killed (including the assassin) and over 50 people were injured. Five victims died later in hospital. Also, in December, a bomb exploded in a supermarket in Saint Petersburg, injuring 13 people. According to Vladimir Pu-

tin, this was also a terrorist attack, and AMAK agency, associated with Islamic State, claimed – albeit without any evidence – that a group dependent on IS was behind the attack. As Putin noted in June: “The so-called Islamic State is preparing new plans to destabilize Central Asia and the southern regions of Russia” (*Putin: dżihadyści*, 2018). Russia has been facing an increased risk of terrorist attacks since it launched a military operation in Syria in September 2015. Two years later, in December, the Russian President ordered the Defense Ministry to withdraw most Russian forces and equipment from Syria (the presence in Syria of the so-called Russian Private Military Company is another matter).

As an expert from the Centre for Eastern Studies, J. Lang, rightly emphasizes, the war in Syria and Iraq has significantly changed contemporary Islamic terrorism, and armed Islamic radicals from Central Asia are no exception. On the one hand, the conflict in Syria contributed to the collapse of old organizations of armed Islamic radicals in the region, but, on the other hand, it popularized ‘jihad tourism’ and created a number of new organizations and environments in Central Asia (*Lang, Eksport*, 2018). The activities of terrorists from Central Asia also pose a threat to Western countries. As described earlier in this paper, this is demonstrated by the attempt made on April 7, in Stockholm by a citizen of Uzbekistan, most likely under the influence of Islamic State propaganda, but not a member of its structures (*ibid.*; Batchelor, Cockburn, et al., *Stockholm*, 2017). In addition, due to the significant weakening of Islamic State, some Islamic radicals from Central Asia, who are unable to return to their countries of origin and who – thanks to the civil war in Syria – not only gained combat experience but also underworld contacts in the region, may be interested in commercial terrorist activities – as mercenaries of other terrorist organizations or special services. This may also be dangerous for other countries, including EU countries, regardless of the separate phenomenon of European Islamic terrorism. The contacts and connections made during the war in Syria between Central Asian radicals and the Chechen community in Europe and Turkey, infiltrated by the security structures of Ramzan Kadyrov, may be particularly dangerous in the European context (*Lang, Eksport*, 2018; Краснов, *Правозащитники...*).

Regarding the remaining two European countries that were analyzed, **Cyprus and Malta**, it should only be mentioned – again in connection with the immigration crisis – that Cyprus was one (as well as Greece and Spain) of the destinations for crossing the Mediterranean, and Malta (plus Finland) have been the only countries that have fulfilled their obligations regarding the relocation of refugees since the crisis.

ATTEMPTED DIAGNOSIS

The authors of this paper want to apply the scenario methodology (*international scenarios*)⁴ to present a vision for the development of further events. Due to volume con-

⁴ The desire to learn about future phenomena and the search for potential opportunities constantly accompanies the professional and personal activities of human beings. To satisfy these desires, people have always tried to develop effective methods for studying the future in order to best prepare for what lies ahead. One such method of forecasting is the scenario method. It consists in

straints, following the above description of the situation, the focus will only be on pointing out trends and showing possible disruptive factors (both positive and negative).

In spite of appearances, 2017 was not a distinctive year in comparison to previous years in both Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe. The migration crisis (albeit of a different structure) and the impasse in eastern Ukraine continued, the radicalization of Europeans' worldviews increased (the popularity of extremist parties grew) and, in more general terms, the political scene continued to pivot towards the ideological right. In the short-term (this year's) perspective, major changes are not expected, but rather stagnation in the above-mentioned issues, both in terms of external and internal factors. Mass migration in the western part of continental Europe continues, albeit on a reduced scale, but the issue of managing the inflow population requires new systemic solutions, and, at present, generates disputes and conflicts, which will feed into the radicalization of public opinion. The governments of EU member states (after enlargement in 2004) are still opposed to forced relocation, which irritates EU policymakers. Additionally, from the perspective of 2016 and 2017, there is a high probability of further terrorist attacks, especially when their frequency in 2017 was more than once a month. Suspicions were confirmed that the pattern of the attack in March 2016 in Brussels, or earlier in November 2015 during the concert in Paris, would be repeated, as exemplified by the attack at the Ariana Grande concert. In the case of the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, it seems that in the short term the *status quo* will continue, although the intensification of attacks on individuals should raise concerns.

In the medium term (several years), these trends will continue, because it is not possible to un-make the well-established multicultural societies in Western Europe. Radicalization is taking place, which is confirmed by the increase in attacks by non-Islamist organizations in Western Europe. On the other hand, the societies that were part of the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War period recognize the dangers arising from unregulated mass migration and strongly oppose any top-down attempts to spread multiculturalism (the creation of multicultural communities, as in the West). One important factor affecting the medium-term forecast is the elections in various EU member states in 2017 (the *status quo* was maintained in Hungary) and, without doubt, the presidency of Donald Trump will remain an external variable that may modify, and even

describing events and indicating their logical and consistent consequences in order to determine how, step by step, an object will develop. The construction of scenarios is based on certain principles and includes the following – in simple terms – subsequent tasks: (1) defining an object, i.e. defining its elements as well as the relationships and convergences between them, as well as defining the scope of the scenario; (2) identification and description of phenomena in the environment of a given object, i.e. identification of the so-called areas of impact that have significant influence on the development of the forecasted object; (3) quantitative documentation of connections between the elements of the object and those occurring between the object and its external environment; (4) preparing variable forecasts from the object's environment which affect the examined object in a significant way; (5) developing a prescenario – creating a forecast of variables of the object; (6) identification of factors interfering with the development process of the object; (7) preparing a scenario which is a synthetic description of the condition and development of the tested object in a specific future, taking into account quantitative and qualitative changes occurring in the object itself as well as its environment, including factors interfering with the development process of the object and their consequences. For more on forecasting in social sciences, especially on the topic of international scenario see e.g.: Borodako (2009); Stryjski (2004); Donaj (2012).

revolutionize, the trends continued from 2016. Provided that armed activities are not intensified in the post-Soviet area, two issues seem to be crucial there at the moment. Firstly, in March 2019, presidential elections should take place in Ukraine, followed by parliamentary elections in October; perhaps a change in tack in the eastern part of the country (a military operation instead of an anti-terrorist one) is intended to bring benefits in the form of improving election polls. Secondly, after recapturing lands in Iraq and Syria from the hands of jihadists, more than 5,000 foreigners who had been fighting for Islamic State returned to their homelands, and are now everywhere – in Russia, but also in Great Britain, France, Saudi Arabia etc. The appropriate presentation of the situation by President Vladimir Putin (analogous to when, after September 11 2001, Russian rhetoric tried to promote the attitude “you have your own terrorists, we have ours – let us join forces”), even exaggerating the threat, could prove extremely helpful for the development of Russian imperial ambitions.

In the long-term (counted in decades), one should expect consequences that are dangerous for Europe. This could be anything from the creation of a Europe of ‘two speeds,’ to the collapse of the European Union itself, to ethnic armed conflicts (civil wars), both in the West and in the East of the continent.

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ABSTRACT

This paper combines a review of the strategic security of European countries in 2017, and the creation – on the basis of the international scenario method – of short-, medium- and long-term forecasts. The authors address both the nature of armed conflicts (including the so-called ‘frozen conflicts’) and the escalation of terrorist acts. Also, the issue of the immigration crisis has been highlighted as causing both the rise of radical public sentiments and being a ‘source’ of the smuggling of people (including terrorists) and goods (including weapons which are later used in attacks).

Keywords: security, terrorist attack, migration crisis, military conflict

PRZEGŁĄD STRATEGICZNY BEZPIECZEŃSTWA PAŃSTW EUROPEJSKICH**STRESZCZENIE**

Treścią publikacji jest dokonanie przeglądu strategicznego bezpieczeństwa europejskiego państw europejskich w 2017 roku i stworzenie – na wzór metody *scenariuszy międzynarodowych* – prognoz krótko-, średnio- oraz długoterminowych. Autorzy zajęli się zarówno wydawnictwami mającymi charakter konfliktów zbrojnych (w tym także tzw. „zamrożonymi konfliktami”), a także problemem nasilających się aktów terrorystycznych. Zwrcono także uwagę na kwestię kryzysu imigracyjnego, powodującego zarówno wzrost nastrojów radykalnych, ale będącego również „źródłem” przemytu osób (w tym terrorystów) oraz towarów (w tym broni, wykorzystywanej następnie w zamachach).

Slowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo, zamach terrorystyczny, kryzys migracyjny, konflikt zbrojny

