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SECURITY OF NORTHERN EUROPEAN STATES. STATUS QUO OR NEW ARCHITECTURE?

Abstract

The Nordic countries are not uniform in terms of membership of the European and global security systems, and therefore the guarantees of their security are different. The purpose of the following article is the analysis of the most important conditions and priorities of the security policy in Northern European states on the background of the ongoing transformation of European security. The article also aims to answer the question: what is the influence of such situation on their national security strategies? Theoretically, the article addresses the problem of small states in the international system. The thorough analysis of documents, reports and systems shows that despite their clear rapprochement in terms of common concern about the regional security, and also changes in the regional and global security, the Nordic countries' national interests concerning the security guarantee remain unchanged. In order to prove the statement the author has arbitrarily selected the issues and materials. The article is based on literature in the English language.

Keywords

Security, Nordic countries, NATO

Introduction

The Nordic countries have many similarities, but also differences² which concern, among others, the directions of foreign and security policy³. The Nordic region is not homogeneous in terms of the affiliation to European and global security systems and, thus, the security guarantee. Denmark, Iceland and Norway are members of the North

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² M. Hilson, *The Nordic Model: Scandinavia since 1945*, Reaktion Books Ltd. London 2008, passim.

³ G. Rdzanek, *Współpraca wojskowa państw nordyckich w pierwszej dekadzie XXI wieku*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo współczesnego świata – wyzwania i zagrożenia*, A. Kusztełek (ed.), Maiuscula – Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Handlu i Usług, Poznań 2011, p. 193-207.

Atlantic Alliance (NATO)⁴. Although Sweden and Finland are key NATO partners, they remain their status of non-aligned countries. As regards security policy, Finland takes special care of well-balanced priorities, considering its relationship with Russia and their common border of 1300 km. Denmark, Sweden and Finland belong to the European Union (EU). Iceland and Norway remain outside the EU, but they participate in its internal market and belong to the Schengen Area of open borders. Out of all the Nordic countries only Finland uses the euro, official currency of the EU. Therefore, in terms of security policy, Northern European states are an interesting area of studies.

Security guarantees in the Nordic countries' strategies

Sweden is commonly perceived as the country of stable and peace-oriented foreign policy, and the principle of military non-alignment is firmly established in its security policy. The non-alignment policy was fundamental for the security strategy of the Three Crowns country until the turn of the 21st century. However, considering the increase of Russia's aggressiveness in international relations, cyberattacks, the dangers of terrorism and organized crime, radicalisation and extremism, it has been decided to tighten the cooperation with the key guarantors of European and global security i.e. the European Union, the North Atlantic Alliance and the United Nations (UN). Nevertheless, the general principles of Sweden's security policy have remained unchanged for many years. During the debate in Riksdag in February 2016 Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs, emphasised that the priority was to ensure political independence of the country⁵. The government issued the opinion that non-participation in military alliances served the country well and contributed to the stability and security in northern Europe. Sweden is currently building its security on the basis of dynamic foreign and security policy connected with credible defence capabilities. Together with other Nordic countries it takes the stance that all the threats for peace and security can be overcome in cooperation with other countries and organizations⁶.

These days Sweden's policy is based on its relationship with the European Union, on Nordic and Baltic cooperation and bilateral contacts⁷. The EU is the main political arena for Sweden, while the UN is the most important platform for international peace

⁴ K. Kubiak, *Nordyckie złudzenia*, „Geopolityka” No 3(39)/ 2015, p. 4–21.

⁵ *Statement of Government Policy in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs*, Wednesday, 24 February 2016 Presented by Margot Wallström, Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Parliamentary Debate on Foreign Affairs, Wednesday, 24 February 2016.

⁶ *Speech by Minister for Foreign Affairs Margot Wallström at the Folk och Försvar Annual National Conference*, 13 January 2016.

⁷ See moore: J. Gryz, *Szwedzka polityka neutralności*, Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej. Departament Bezpieczeństwa Międzynarodowego, Adam Marszałek, Warszawa-Toruń 1996; R. M. Czarny, *Szwecja w Unii Europejskiej. Studium polityczno-prawne*, WSU, Kielce 2002, p. 114–116; R.M. Czarny, *Teoretyczne i praktyczne aspekty neutralności Szwecji*, „Sprawy Międzynarodowe” No 10/ 1998; J. Gotkowska, *Szwedzki szpagat. Polityka obronna Szwecji a region Morza Bałtyckiego*, „Punkt Widzenia”, Ośrodek Studiów Wschodnich, No 33/2013.

and security. The key elements of the construction are the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO and transatlantic bonds⁸.

Following the incidents in the Ukraine in 2014, the Baltic region has been the area mostly exposed to Russia's increased military activity. The confrontation line between Russia and NATO has been moved closer to Sweden. However, it cannot be categorically stated what consequences it brings for the Tree Crowns. Although Russia's military attack on the Baltic states seems unlikely, the activities of the Federation are unpredictable. This, in turn, has triggered a debate on Sweden's Armed Forces capabilities and its military presence on Gotland, the Baltic island of great strategic importance (in September 2016, Micael Bydén, the Supreme Commander of the Swedish Armed Forces made a decision on the permanent military presence on Gotland). Despite concerns connected with Russia's increased military activity, most Swedish people still refuse to resign of neutrality and oppose NATO membership, which complies with the policy of the current Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven, who emphasises the tradition of Swedish neutrality. In April 2015 the government proposed a strategy of Sweden's defence covering the years from 2016 to 2020, which for the first time in more than two decades assumed a steady increase of defence spending (in 2016 the defence spending stood at 1% of Sweden's GDP) by 10.2 billion SEK (\$1.18 billion, €1.09 billion) over the next five years, which is by 2.2% every year (up to 11% above the current expenditure). Total defence spending over the next five years will be 224 billion SEK⁹. The defence bill accounts for the deteriorating security situation in Europe. Therefore, the priority is to increase the Armed Forces operational capabilities and provide total defence. The strategy points at the UN as the guarantor responsible for international peace and security. The suggested reform of the army sanctions the transition to modern forces, ready for international dislocations and oriented on crisis management missions. Appointing Sweden for a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the 2017-2018 term confirms, according to Sweden's government, the rightfulness of its foreign and security policy, which is based on universal principles of democracy, international law and human rights.

From the perspective of the regional cooperation, the bill refers to common lifestyles, values and interests which connect all the Nordic countries. They should aim at long-term planning, inter-operativeness of the Armed Forces, enhanced cooperation of defence industries, research and development in the defence sector. According to Sweden, cooperation between the countries of the region should be taken into account first when choosing the security guarantee. The government has emphasised that the Nordic, European and transatlantic cooperation is complementary, and also pointed at the need of enhanced cooperation with the United States and the Baltic countries.

The paradox of Swedish neutrality is that the country wants to remain non-aligned, but at the same time modernises its military forces, tightens the cooperation with

⁸ In June 2016 Ash Carter, Secretary of US Defence and Peter Hultqvist, Sweden's Minister of Defence signed a letter of intent concerning closer defence cooperation between the two countries in response to growing challenges connected with security and facing Russia's increased aggressiveness in the Nordic-Baltic region.

⁹ See: *Military Spending in Europe In The Wake Of The Ukraine Crisis*, SIPRI 13 April 2015.

NATO and other EU (within the declaration of military solidarity) and Nordic countries. The proposed solution to the discrepancy is called the Hultqvist doctrine. On the one hand, Sweden is reinforcing its defence potential and strengthening its military capability to cooperate with Finland and the USA; on the other hand, it is building closer relationship with NATO, retaining its status which does not belong to any military alliance¹⁰.

Strategic choices of Finland have been dependent not only on geography, but also historical experiences which were, in most respects, unique. Finland has gone a long way after World War II, during which it had to adjust its security and defence policies to the changing circumstances. Unlike Sweden, it does not have a long tradition of neutrality, its policy of non-alignment was initiated in the period directly following World War II¹¹. The treaty of 1948 signed with Russia on friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance includes an entry on remaining outside the conflicts of superpowers and preserving peace according to the rules of the UN, which is the basis of international multilateral cooperation and the ultimate authority in the area of international security. The treaty forbids its signatories to become members of a military alliance against each other, and Finland cannot allow its territory to be used in an attack on the Soviet Union.

With the fall of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War Finland has found itself in a new geopolitical situation. The situation could be described as stormy and unpredictable, which has confirmed the government's idea of the necessity to preserve *status quo* in foreign and security policies¹².

Finland's security policy is based on three factors: independent defence of its territory (land mainly), the EU membership and military non-alignment. Finland focuses its interests on the closest area – the Baltic Sea region and the Barents Sea. Although the military situation of the region was changed after the Cold War, Finland's assessment of the situation and the security guarantee were not. Finland still remains wary of Russia, especially after the annexation of Crimea. Consequently, the Finnish Defence Forces are undergoing a reform. The restructuring is to strengthen their operational capabilities¹³. Finland does not belong to any military alliance, but it is ready to protect its territory, relying on its own resources. Therefore, it maintains and develops its defence forces and credible military potential. It has one of the largest armies in Europe (currently the army consists of 230,000 troops, but the government has ruled the number will gradually rise to 280,000 in 2020¹⁴). The Finnish Defence is based on general conscription and well-trained reserves. The national defence remains prior to any other military tasks. The Finnish concept of "total defence"

¹⁰ Sweden's Defence Policy 2016 to 2020, 01.06.2015.

¹¹ J. Jokela, *Europeanisation and Foreign Policy: State Identity in Finland and Britain*, Routledge 2011, p. 60ff.; D. G. Kirby, *Finland in the Twentieth Century: A History and an Interpretation*, University of Minnesota Press Minneapolis 1979, p. 181ff.; M. Jakobson, *Finland in the New Europe*, Praeger Frederick 1998, p. 73ff.

¹² *The Military Doctrine Of Finland, Statement by the Chief of the General Headquarters of the Finnish Defence Forces*, Vice Admiral Jan Klenberg Seminar on Military Doctrine 17 January 1990.

¹³ *The Finnish Defence Forces Annual Report 2014*.

¹⁴ *Government's Defence Report*, Prime Minister's Office Publications 7/2017, Helsinki 2017.

assumes that all citizens must support military efforts during the wartime, and in peacetime provide assistance in cases of natural disasters or malfunctions.

Finland's citizens support the regional cooperation, especially with Sweden. This cooperation serves not only Finland's interests, but is also aimed at strengthening the security of the Baltic Sea region, as well as Finland's and Sweden's defence capabilities. Russia's activity in the Ukraine gave both of the countries a new stimulus to tighten cooperation with NATO and potentially to become members of the North Atlantic Treaty. However, the analysts are certain that the bilateral cooperation is oriented merely for the peacetime¹⁵. The existing activities, such as joint military exercises, strengthen the cooperation, but they are insufficient to increase the defence capabilities of the two countries. They still lack one common vision resulting with a bilateral alliance, which would have a more significant impact on the security of the two countries. Currently, Sweden's and Finland's cooperation is developing and has symbolical value.

It is worth mentioning that Finland is focused equally on its activities in the Nordic region and on its cooperation with Russia¹⁶, which remains an important trading partner. Russia has been perceived as a potential threat due to its geographical proximity and the length of their common border. Russia's growing military activity and the Ukrainian conflict have provoked a discussion on Finland's security strategy, especially which concerns its possible membership in the North Atlantic Alliance.

Finland strengthened its international position by joining the EU in 1995 (the need and opportunity appeared when Sweden formally applied for the membership). The EU became an important guarantor of Finland's security through the EU's Common Defence and Security Policy¹⁷, which *de facto* ended Finnish policy of neutrality. The main reason behind Finland's decision was seeking the security guarantee (though the membership does not include military guarantee of security, it provides the protection resulting from the idea of solidarity)¹⁸.

Despite increasing expenses on defence (1.37% of its GDP in 2016 as compared to 1.29% in 2015), Finland remains unprepared to sustain the attack of the enemy forces, therefore it emphasises the necessity to strengthen the EU's security. It insists on the implementation and development of the commitments resulting from the EU's solidarity clause and mutual assistance clause. These clauses, however, do not encompass the guarantee of common security, and most of the EU's members prioritise NATO. Therefore, Juha Sipilä, Prime Minister of the new centre-right coalition government, formed after April 2015 election, changed the rhetoric of her predecessors (the former Minister for Foreign Affairs Erikki Tuomioja favoured the policy of Finlandization and concession to Russia, whereas others in Prime Minister

¹⁵ T. Etzold, Ch. Opitz, *Between Military Non-Alignment and Integration Finland and Sweden in Search of a New Security Strategy*, SWP Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs, April 2015.

¹⁶ *New Year Speech by President of the Republic Sauli Niinistö*, 1 Jan 2016, [online:] www.pr.esidentti.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=339663&nodeid=44810&contentlan=2&culture=en-US (04.12.2016).

¹⁷ *The European Security Development and Finnish Defence*, Report by the Council of State to Parliament, 17 March 1997, p. 21.

¹⁸ M. Koivisto, *Witness to History. The Memoirs of Mauno Koivisto. President of Finland 1982- 1994*, Hurst & Co London 1997, p. 246 ff.

Alexander Stubb's cabinet supported the idea of tightening the cooperation with NATO) and admitted that Finland can join NATO "at any time" over the next four years¹⁹.

The cooperation with NATO is important for Finland. It was started in 1994, when the country joined the Partnership for Peace programme (and in 1997 accessed the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council) and became a valuable allied partner in military operations and missions in the Balkans and in Afghanistan²⁰. The programme was an opportunity to develop and strengthen cooperation with other members of NATO and Finland's Defence Forces. At that time, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia was institutionally weak. Finland is treated as a close ally of NATO by signing, together with Sweden, a Host Nation Support agreement in September 2014. Intensified cooperation means exchanging information, coordinating trainings and workshops, and also arranging joint activities to reduce potential threats. It is an important step towards NATO membership, however it remains an unlikely scenario²¹. NATO supporters claim Finland's capabilities are insufficient, and that Russia already perceives Finland as a member of NATO. The opponents fear that membership in the Alliance may provoke a retaliation from Moscow as Finland will be treated as a potential enemy. Undoubtedly, the Baltic countries and Scandinavian neighbour states of Sweden and Finland would wish for the full integration with the Alliance, which could contribute to tightening the cooperation in the area of regional security. Moreover, because of their military capabilities, infrastructure and geographical situation, Finland and Sweden may strengthen NATO capabilities to sustain and, if necessary, to defend the Nordic-Baltic region against any external threats. The Finns do not usually speculate about the possibility of a war, but in case of NATO membership they are afraid of Russia's response. Being military non-aligned, Finland treats the USA as an important partner and the guarantor of European security. The government is planning to intensify its cooperation with the USA, by taking part in trainings and workshops in order to increase national capabilities of territorial defence.

The report on the foreign and security policy which was presented in June 2016 showed that the government aimed at strengthening international position of Finland, emphasising its independence and territorial integrity. The main objective of the government is trying to avoid becoming a party to any military conflict. The report shed no new light on the objectives of Finland's security policy. It was pointed out that the current strategy (military non-alliance, cooperation with Sweden, continuation

¹⁹ Ch. Harress, *Neutral Finland, Russia's Neighbor, Reserves Right To Join NATO As New Government Takes Power*, 26.05.2015, [online:] <http://www.ibtimes.com/neutral-finland-russias-neighbor-reserves-right-join-nato-new-government-takes-power-1937822> (01.09.2017).

²⁰ L. G. Michel, *Finland, Sweden, and NATO: From "Virtual" to Formal Allies?*, Strategic Forum National Defense University, Institute for National Strategic Studies, February 2011.

²¹ The opinion poll carried out in the period from September to October 2016 showed there were 25% respondents in favour of NATO accession, this number decreased from 27% in the previous year. See: *Finns' Opinions On Foreign And Security Policy, National Defence And Security*, Bulletins And Reports, The Advisory Board For Defence Information, December, 2016.

of close cooperation with NATO and sustaining the possibility of membership in its structures) was given the right direction²².

Norway has been perceived as a country with a low level of threats, however the discussion on its security has been ongoing. The country's location is of great geo-strategic importance. Its territorial dimension is the main aspect of the security policy, its geography being the major factor of development as it is connected with available resources, natural borders, divisions and relationships with other countries. Norway's priorities in security have evolved over the years – starting from territorial defence during the Cold War, through gradual reduction of the Armed Forces resulting from the stabilisation in Europe. At the turn of the 21st century Norway's objectives were verified. Its current strategy is based on three priorities: the High North, active participation in the UN, the EU and NATO peace operations, continued adaptation and modernisation of the Norwegian Armed Forces²³. Preservation of political sovereignty and the defence of territorial integrity are currently the key elements of Norway's security policy.

Norway's security outlook is both Atlantic and European²⁴. Norway belongs to Atlantic European countries, and has strong historical connections with the West. In the past it sought protection in western superpowers, particularly in the UK, and later in the USA, which was important during the Cold War when Norway stood in opposition to the Soviet Union. Norway's security policy is based on NATO membership, but the total concept of security is complex and is connected with the changing circumstances of the security policy in the Nordic region, with transborder threats and regional conflicts.

Norway has found itself in a more demanding security environment. New challenges which have appeared in the surrounding of NATO member states make it necessary to introduce changes to the security policy. The political, economic and social situation on the Old Continent has had direct consequences in Norway. In effect, its security policy is multilateral and takes into account different factors²⁵. Norway's current security strategy is based on the UN, the EU, the North Atlantic Alliance as well as close cooperation and good relationships with the neighbouring states.

The UN membership is fundamental to Norway's foreign policy. Promoting international cooperation and respect for the international law are the ultimate ways of protecting common interests. According to Norway, the UN has a unique mandate to act on developing democracy, human rights and international cooperation.

Considering the UN's superior role in building the world order, NATO remains the basis of Norway's security and defence. The North Atlantic Alliance is for the

²² *Review on Finland's security cooperation*, Ministry For Foreign Affairs Of Finland, 2016; *Government Report on Finnish Foreign and Security Policy*, Prime Minister's Office Publications 9/2016.

²³ *Capable Force Strategic Concept for the Norwegian Armed Forces*, Norwegian Ministry of Defence, Oslo, 13 November 2009.

²⁴ *Global security challenges in Norway's foreign policy Terrorism, organised crime, piracy and cyber threats*. Meld. St. 37 (2014 – 2015) Report to the Storting (white paper) Summary. Recommendations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 19 June 2015, approved by the Council of State on the same day, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015.

²⁵ *Between Reassurance and Reengagement?*, Speech by Prime Minister Erna Solberg at the Munich Security Conference in Germany, 13 February 2016.

Norwegians the long-standing example of a relationship based on collective defence. Norway being a small state has no possibilities or capabilities of self-defence, and in case of a military attack is totally dependent on its allies in NATO. Norway's decision to join NATO in 1949 confirmed and strengthened the Atlantic basis of its security policy²⁶.

Currently, in a new security environment, Europe's position has changed significantly. Similarly to modifications in Europe and the world, Norway's security policy is being redefined. Considering its geopolitical situation Norway has been cooperating with the politically strong EU and the member states. On the other hand, it maintains a strong relationship with the USA, which remains the most powerful ally in case of a crisis or war.

Norway is primarily a Nordic country, but also a European one. It is not as strongly identified with the Baltic Sea region as with the Arctic. Therefore, the changes that take place in the High North are of great importance as is the growing interest that many countries take in that region, particularly Russia, for which it is geopolitically and strategically relevant. Its increased military activity in the High North, the aggression in Ukraine and the illegal annexation of Crimea led to Norway paying more attention to security threats. As a result, the bilateral military cooperation with Russia was suspended. Although the relationship between Russia and Norway changed after 2014, the government has attached great importance to continuing the cooperation in other areas, involving institutions but also informal human partnership.

In 2015 the government decided to prepare a white paper on foreign and security policy. At the beginning of 2016, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Børge Brende said: "The main lines of Norwegian foreign and security policy will remain unchanged. Nevertheless, we need to adapt to a rapidly changing world. We need to set priorities. We need to clearly define Norway's interests. We need to make some crucial policy choices"²⁷. In April 2017, when the white paper was launched, the leader of Norwegian diplomacy concluded: "We must maintain and further develop our transatlantic cooperation, pursue a consistent, predictable policy in relation to Russia and continue our strong engagement for an international order based on values that are important to Norway. NATO and the US security guarantee will remain the cornerstone of Norway's security policy"²⁸. One of the key conclusions of the white paper is that Norway should tighten cooperation in the area of the security policy with its European allies (Germany, the UK, France and the Netherlands) and also with the Nordic countries (by organising regular meetings of Nordic Ministers of Foreign Affairs). Moreover, it was declared that the Norwegian Armed Forces would be strengthened and the defence budget would be gradually increased up to 2% GDP as required by NATO (the decision was taken during the NATO summit in Wales in 2014). Norway's government suggests increasing its defence spending up to NOK 7.2

²⁶ N. Graeger, *From "forces for good" to "forces for status"? Small state military status seeking*, [in]: *Small State Status Seeking: Norway's Quest for International Standing*, B. Carvalho, I.B Neumann (ed.), Routledge Taylor&Francis Group, London-New York 2015, p. 86 ff.

²⁷ Quoted in: *New white paper on Norwegian foreign and security policy*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 08.02.2016.

²⁸ *The future course of Norwegian foreign and security policy*, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, 21.04.2017.

billion (€767.7 million) over the next four years, and will increase the defence spending with NOK 165 billion (€17.5 billion) over twenty years. Norway is willing to take over responsibility for European security. One element of the concept is chairmanship of the OSCE in 2020. In this way Norway wants to participate in maintaining and developing one of the most important pan-European organisations for cooperation. According to Børge Brende, “A key objective of Norway’s chairmanship would be to promote transparency, build trust and reduce tensions through security policy dialogue”²⁹.

The starting point of Denmark’s security policy is its closest neighbourhood, the Baltic Sea Region. Denmark played the key role in supporting the Baltic states in their newly gained independence and efforts to become NATO members. Having achieved those goals, Denmark focused on international operation mainly in the Middle East area rather than on regional security. At the turn of the 21st century, Danish government paid more attention to climate changes in the High North and the resulting opportunities and threats³⁰. Denmark became an active and committed member of the Arctic community, willing to exert influence in the region (through Greenland and its natural resources).

Denmark’s foreign policy is based on both the Atlantic and the European pillars. However, in the Arctic, Denmark limits the role of the EU as it hopes to strengthen the alliance with the US, its neighbour on the other side of the Atlantic. Denmark has always been more Atlantic-oriented country than its Nordic neighbours and has aimed to gain the US support in case of potential military threats (the threat of resurgent Russia with its still impressive Northern Fleet is one of the main concerns of the region)³¹.

During the Cold War, it was the Soviet Union that posed the main threat for Denmark, and NATO membership became fundamental for its security and defence policy. In the 1990s Denmark led an active foreign policy, giving its Armed Forces an important role of “a security policy tool”. Terrorism and the “fallen states” were considered the most important military threats, therefore there was a shift from territorial defence to international operations. After the terrorists attacks on the USA on 11th September 2001, the perception of the threats was changed. Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and international terrorism became an important part of Denmark’s security policy. Although the conventional attack on Denmark seems unlikely, the government admits that the country’s feeling of security has been weakened. It is connected with the increased need of attention in Denmark’s direct neighbourhood. It is true that Russia is not perceived as a direct threat for Danish territory, but the Russian-Ukrainian conflict has influenced the security of the Nordic countries. Therefore, since 2014 Denmark has been seeking deepened cooperation with its neighbours (on 4th January 2016 Denmark’s Minister of Defence, Peter Christensen and Sweden’s Minister of Defence, Peter Hultqvist signed an

²⁹ Norway willing to shoulder its share of responsibility for security in Europe, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 21.04.2017.

³⁰ K. Kubiak, *Dania wobec arktycznych wyzwań*, „Rocznik Bezpieczeństwa Międzynarodowego” 2014, vol. 8, No 1, p.77-93.

³¹ D. Rossa-Kilian, *Duńska Polityka Zagraniczna i Bezpieczeństwa a Koncepcja „Małych Państw”*, [in:] „Słupskie Studia Historyczne” No 14/2008, p. 125-135.

agreement to deepen and strengthen the bilateral cooperation in the area of defence). Denmark perceives the Nordic military alliance as a useful tool in managing its foreign and security policy. It cannot and shall not act on its own, but focus on cooperation in the group of the Nordic and Baltic states. Despite being the EU country, Denmark has resigned from the cooperation within Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP). Nowadays, however, politicians are inclined to declassify the clause rejecting CFSP, but the decision requires general agreement and is connected with the necessity of organising a referendum. Nevertheless, NATO has been the basis and ultimate guarantee of Denmark's safety.

Denmark's defence spending has been reduced since the end of the Cold War, which is the result of the favourable situation in the area of security. Despite considerable changes in the security environment of Europe, Denmark has remained the only country in the Nordic region whose defence expenditure has not been increased. In fact, it spends less than ever (in 2016 no more than 1% of its GDP³², as compared to over 2% of its GDP in the 1980s³³). However, further cuts of the defence budget may be difficult to sustain.

In May 2016, former Danish ambassador to the USA, Peter Taksøe-Jensen submitted a report which contained a review of Danish foreign and security policy. It points out to five priorities which have impact on the security of the country:

- Arctic and the Baltic Sea Region: sustainable development of these areas should be Denmark's prime objective;
- Europe: Denmark as a member state of the EU must take responsibility for peace, stability and prosperity in Europe;
- refugees and migration: the state should prevent the uncontrollable flow by strengthening integration of foreign policy in the EU countries;
- economic diplomacy: using this tool the government shall contribute to economic growth, prosperity and innovation in Denmark;
- climate change: the government should promote global solutions based on Danish values and interests.

Moreover, NATO was indicated as the main guarantee of stability, and thus an essential element of Denmark's security policy³⁴.

Iceland is one of a few countries without its armed forces. After the end of the World War II, fearing the Soviet domination, Iceland became one of NATO's founder members in 1949. Thus, it resigned of its policy of neutrality which was declared after gaining independence in 1918. The reason for joining the Alliance was Iceland's strategic location, and the conclusion that geographical distance would not guarantee security because of the development of military technologies as well as the fact that Norway and Denmark joined NATO. In 1951 Iceland signed a defence agreement with the US according to which the US military personnel based in Iceland was to

³² *Defence Expenditures of NATO Countries (2009-2016)*, 4 July 2016 COMMUNIQUE PR/CP(2016)116.

³³ Military expenditure (% of GDP). Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), *Yearbook: Armaments, Disarmament and International Security*.

³⁴ *Danish Diplomacy and Defence in Times of Change, A Review of Denmark's Foreign and Security Policy*, May 2016.

protect it and serve other interests connected with the US and NATO security on the North Atlantic³⁵.

In 2006 Americans left their military base in Keflavik. The decision resulted from the fact that the US shifted its security policy interest from Europe to the North Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea. It is worth mentioning this reflected a broader geopolitical trend, namely, that the probability of conventional military conflicts was decreasing. The attention was paid to new and more complex threats: worldwide terrorism, fallen states, organised crime, cyberattacks, natural disasters. A more comprehensive approach to security challenges was advocated³⁶. This decision initiated a new stage in the area of Iceland's security and defence. The government attempted to define the priorities in the foreign policy and also the defence and security policy. However, the most important problem was to respond to the question whether the focus should be on the US, Europe or the Nordic region.

In October 2007, former Icelandic Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ingibjörg Solrun Gísladóttir appointed an independent commission to assess the risks for the country. The group was entitled to assess all risks and threats, both military and civil, internal and external. The Risk Assessment Report was submitted in 2009, but the new government was managing the consequences of the economic crisis and the discussion on the security was put aside. By the end of 2011, on the initiative of the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Össur Skarphéðinsson, the parliament appointed an *ad hoc* committee consisting of MPs from different parties to consider the principles of a comprehensive national security policy. The work was finished in March 2013 and the debate concerning the report was initiated in January 2014. The report indicated that the cooperation with the US and NATO should be continued as a guarantee of Iceland's security. However, at that time public discourse was still dominated by economic and social problems and the need of cuts in public spending. In effect, the government's attitude towards the EU membership was changed. Prime Minister, Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson expressed the opinion that the decision to join the EU had been misguided and hasty. In March 2015 Gunnlaugsson declared that Iceland would no longer stand as a candidate to the EU, and its interests would be better represented outside the EU³⁷.

In September 2015, the US Deputy Secretary of Defence Bob Work visited the former military air base in Keflavik. The purpose of the visit was to discuss military cooperation with the US, which was concluded with signing a new Joint Declaration by the two parties. The main reason for the US return to Keflavik is the growing number of Russian air and sea incidents in the Arctic countries, including Canada, Finland, Norway, Sweden and also Iceland. The US is interested to position its patrol aircraft in the former air base. The idea was confirmed in February 2016 by Pentagon, which requested for USD 20 million in the fiscal year 2017 to rebuild the

³⁵ G. Gunnarsson, *Icelandic Security Policy: Context and Trends*, "Cooperation and Conflict", XVII, 1982, p. 257-272.

³⁶ "The Race for the North Pole" Icelandic and Nordic security policy in transition. Delivered on 29 August 2007 Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Foreign Minister.

³⁷ A. J.K. Bailes, K. Þ. Ólafsson, *Developments in Icelandic Security Policy*, "The Icelandic Review of Politics and Administration Stjórnmal og stjórnsýsla", VOL 10, NO 2 (2014), p. 1-15.

infrastructure in Keflavik base³⁸ in order to house Boeing P-8 Poseidon aircraft to be used for regional patrol flights³⁹. In the light of the reports about the US return to Keflavik base, in February 2016, Iceland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, fearing Russia's response, issued a statement to avoid further speculations⁴⁰. It was clarified that Iceland did not hold any formal talks with the US concerning permanent stationing of the US troops in Keflavik. However, as a consequence of changes in the European security environment, there was a discussion on the possibility of increased presence of the US and other NATO countries in the North Atlantic and in Iceland on the basis of mutual defence commitments⁴¹.

In April 2016, for the first time in Iceland's history, the parliament approved the National Security Policy which was based on the holistic approach and focused on three areas: active foreign affairs policy, defence cooperation with other countries and civil security. Iceland was described as a nation of no resources or desire to maintain an army, while its security and defence were to be provided through active cooperation with other countries and within international organisations. The document drew attention to Iceland's interests in the Arctic region and ensured that its membership in NATO and the 1951 agreement with the US would remain key pillars of defence. The emphasis was also put on the Nordic cooperation. Additionally, the strategy refers to new, non-military security challenges and supports increased cybersecurity, emphasises that the government's policy must take into account new threats such as terrorism, organised crime and other threats to economic and financial security. Moreover, the document states that Iceland with its territorial waters shall be declared free of nuclear weapon⁴².

With reference to the adopted document, Iceland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lilja Alfreðsdóttir proposed the establishment of the National Security Council. The bill was passed in the parliament in September 2016. The council supervises and monitors Iceland's national security policy and is chaired by the Prime Minister.

³⁸ Department Of The Navy Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Budget Estimates FY 2017 Program, Military Construction Active Force (MCON) And Family Housing Programs Justification Data As Submitted To Congress February 2016; Department Of The Navy FY 2017 Military Construction Program European Reassurance Initiative (ERI), Index of Locations for Navy and Marine Corps Projects, p. 236.

³⁹ Boeing P-8 Poseidon is the US maritime patrol aircraft that conducts anti-submarine and anti-surface warfare. The aircraft will be used to gather intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance data The aircraft is to monitor the GIUK gap i.e. the area in the northern Atlantic Ocean between Greenland, Iceland and the UK, which is of special importance considering the increased activity of Russian submarines in that region.

⁴⁰ In response to Iceland's support for the EU sanctions against Russia following the Ukrainian conflict, in August 2015 the Federation imposed embargo on imported goods from Iceland.

⁴¹ *No talks on permanent stationing in Keflavik*, Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, 10.02.2016.

⁴² PARLIAMENTARY RESOLUTION on a National Security Policy for Iceland. 145th legislative session 2015-2016. Parliamentary document 1166 — Case no. 327. no. 26/145. Approved by the Parliament of Iceland on 13 April 2016; Committee for the development of a National Security Policy for Iceland; *Brottför varnarliðsins – þróun varnarmála Iceland National Security in the Post-IDF Era National Museum*, 6 October 2016 Keynote Address by H.E. Lilja Alfreðsdóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Conclusion

Foreign policy of a small state aims to protect mainly its sovereignty, identity and security. It must be adjusted to geopolitical conditions. Historical experiences are also of great importance. Since the end of the Cold War geostrategy has divided small European states, which has influenced their choices in terms of the security guarantee: their affiliations are different despite many similarities and geographical proximity. Norway, Denmark and Iceland belong to NATO, whereas Finland and Sweden want to remain military non-aligned; Sweden, Finland and Denmark belong to the EU, Norway and Iceland remain outside the EU. Denmark, Sweden and Finland are interested mainly in their inland borders, whereas Norway pays more attention to the High North and the Atlantic Ocean.

Changes in the international security environment, Russia's return to the policy of power and the resulting growth of its military potential and activity have shaken the structures of Europe's security system and created the feeling of insecurity in the neighbourhood of Northern European states. Unpredictability has become a new rule. However, despite the changes, the Nordic states' strategies of security are constant. Regardless of the choices made in the security policy, the Nordic countries consistently emphasise that security can be maintained by regional approach, therefore they are developing bi- and multilateral military relationships⁴³. Although they are all threatened by Russia, it does not translate into creating a community of Nordic security.

What unites the countries of Northern Europe is emphasising the importance of transatlantic partnership. Seeking their security guarantee, they look towards the US. However, the change of the US President has transformed the US foreign and security policy. It has influenced transatlantic relationships of the Northern European states. Donald Trump's policy referring to climate protection or women's rights (which have always been important in the Nordic countries) may alter the relationship between the countries. From the perspective of the Nordic countries' interests and security, Putin and Trump's assurance of mutual interaction and friendship may seem puzzling⁴⁴. This may, in the foreseeable future, change the architecture of the security in the Nordic region.

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⁴³ *Regional security challenges discussed by the Nordic Defence Ministers meeting in Copenhagen*, 30-31 March 2016.

⁴⁴ M. Green, *Putin: Trump appeared to agree Moscow did not interfere in election*, CNN politics, 08 July 2017.

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Streszczenie

Państwa regionu nordyckiego nie są jednolite pod względem przynależności do europejskiego i światowego systemu bezpieczeństwa, a co za tym idzie gwarancje ich bezpieczeństwa są różne. Celem artykułu jest analiza najważniejszych uwarunkowań i założeń polityki bezpieczeństwa państw Europy Północnej na tle dokonujących się przeobrażeń w środowisku bezpieczeństwa europejskiego i odpowiedź na pytanie: jak wpłynęły one na ich narodowe strategie bezpieczeństwa? W ujęciu teoretycznym, artykuł dotyczy kwestii małych państw w systemie międzynarodowym. Dokonana analiza treści dokumentów, raportów i systemowa, pozwala stwierdzić, iż pomimo wyraźnego zbliżenia państw nordyckich w zakresie wspólnej troski o bezpieczeństwo regionu, a nadto zmian w regionalnym i globalnym środowisku bezpieczeństwa, ich narodowe interesy dotyczące gwarancji bezpieczeństwa, pozostają bez zmian. W celu dowiedzenia twierdzenia konieczne było przeprowadzenie selekcji zagadnień i materiałów. Autorka dokonała tego arbitralnie. Artykuł oparto na piśmiennictwie anglojęzycznym.

Bezpieczeństwo państw Europy Północnej. *Status quo* czy nowa architektura?

Słowa kluczowe

Bezpieczeństwo, państwa nordyckie, NATO

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