



VOICES FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

EMERGING LEADERS SPEAK ON THE SECOND
ANNUAL TRANSATLANTIC SECURITY INITIATIVE

Voices from Central and Eastern Europe

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Attention Communications Department
International Republican Institute
1225 Eye Street NW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20005
info@iri.org

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FOREWORD

Breanna Kerr

"Voices from Central and Eastern Europe: Emerging Leaders Speak on the Second Annual Transatlantic Security Initiative" is a compilation of five white papers that explore the new and emerging security threats across the region after Russia's military invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Commissioned by the International Republican Institute (IRI), with support of the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), this publication reflects the insights of a diverse group of young leaders in the security space from Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic.

Each chapter considers a different security topic, from NATO resilience and deterrence to energy security and fighting foreign authoritarian influence in cyberspace. Each case study offers unique perspectives from the public to the private sector, from Slovakia to Romania, as the authors were grouped across country lines and had to work together to compile their opinion papers.

IRI would like to thank the authors for their participation in the program and in the great efforts that went into each paper. It was a group effort -- much like fortifying regional security -- and could not have been accomplished alone. IRI would also like to thank the alumni from TSI I for their contributions and connections to the network. We look forward to future collaboration with a new group of participants and expanding the network starting in February 2023.

THE 2022 NATO STRATEGIC CONCEPT FROM A CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE

Transatlantic Security Initiative II

Aneta Jarmoliková, Adéla Špačková, Artúr Hónich, Jan Pawelec,
Andreea Leonte, Alexandra Žáková, Frederika Klčová

INTRODUCTION

At the Madrid Summit in June 2022, NATO allies adopted a new Strategic Concept (SC) with the aim of ensuring that the Alliance “remains fit and resourced for the future” in a dynamic security environment.¹ Since NATO is an Alliance that works based on consensus, the SC is a powerful declaration of values, a shared vision, and a set of related goals underpinned by the joint military, diplomatic, and economic power of 30 nations with close to one billion citizens.



Figure 1: NATO Madrid Summit 2022²

1. NATO, “NATO 2022 Strategic Concept,” June 29, 2022, accessed September 14, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.
2. Monaghan, Sean, Collin Wall, and Pierre Morcos. “What Happened At NATO’s Madrid Summit?” CSIS. July 1, 2022. <https://www.csis.org/analysis/what-happened-natos-madrid-summit>.

Consensus on the assessment of the strategic environment and on NATO's three core tasks (deterrence and defense, crisis prevention and management, and cooperative security) are at the core of the SC. However, NATO allies will continue to have diverging political positions and priorities related to certain issues, and the objectives and decisions outlined in the SC might also have different implications for each country.

This chapter presents the perspectives of five Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) states, namely, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia, on the SC. Where appropriate, the chapter also discusses developments that took place since the publication of the SC in June 2022. The issues discussed include country perspectives and positions on threat perceptions, defense spending, national deployments to strengthen NATO's Eastern Flank, the status of Finland and Sweden's NATO accession, and participation in defense innovation programs. The chapter concludes by assessing the main points of commonalities as well as divergences between these five allies.

THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The 2022 Strategic Concept received a warm welcome by the Czech government, which firmly stands by the common values and threats described in the SC. Prime Minister Petr Fiala praised the assessment of the strategic environment, in particular, the clear-eyed approach to the threats posed by the Russian Federation and the challenges related to the ambitions and activities of the People's Republic of China (PRC).

Prime Minister Fiala also stated that the Czech Republic will accomplish the implementation of the NATO-wide commitment to increase defense spending to two percent of GDP by 2024. Specifically, the increase in defense spending will be used for bolstering military capabilities and the modernization of the Armed Forces to sustain a strategic edge and enhance interoperability within the Alliance. The current developments can be seen in negotiations over Lockheed Martin's F-35 Lightning II multirole fighters and Swedish CV90 infantry fighting vehicles acquisition as one of the key defense expenditure priorities. The Czech Republic is among the 22 signatories of the NATO Innovation Fund,

which is a venture capital fund that aims to invest 1 billion euros within the next 15 years.³ Prague will also host one of the nine accelerator sites as part of NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA).⁴ Once again, this confirms the direction toward being active in cutting-edge technological developments.

Prior to Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Czech military maintained a presence on the Eastern Flank in Latvia and Lithuania, being a significant contributor to NATO's Eastern Flank deterrence activities.⁵ In August 2022, the Czech Republic approved an increase of its military presence by NATO's eastern borders by up to 1,200 soldiers.⁶

Since April 2022, the Czech army has been commanding a new NATO Battle Group established in Slovakia.⁷ Czech and Polish fighter jets now protect Slovakia's airspace while the country transitions from old Soviet-made jets to American aircraft.⁸ Moreover, the Czech Air Force also participates in NATO's Baltic Air Policing mission.

In 2022, the Czech Republic began talks with its American counterparts to negotiate a bilateral Defense Cooperation Agreement that will create a framework to further deepen and enhance already close security cooperation between both nations. The Agreement is now being finalized and shall be approved and ratified by both the Czech Parliament and President in early 2023.⁹

The Czech Republic is also a strong supporter of NATO's Open Door Policy and President Zeman signed the ratification documents regarding the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO on August 31, 2022.

The Czech Republic has been both a fertile ground and a prime target for Russian disinformation and hybrid interference in general.¹⁰ Due to the deteriorating security environment, it is expected there will be backlash and challenges from Czech citizens about the security and defense policies. The Czech government will need to develop a clear and concise communication strategy regarding NATO enlargement, the increase in financial contributions to NATO's common funding, and the increased pace of defense modernization, when pursuing their commitments as a reliable ally.

3. NATO, "NATO launches Innovation Fund," NATO.int, 30 June 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_197494.htm.
4. NATO, "NATO Launches Innovation Fund," NATO, accessed September 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_197494.htm.
5. "Česká armáda bude moci nasadit na východní hranici NATO až 1200 vojáků, schválila sněmovna," iROZHLAS, accessed September 11, 2022, https://www.irozhlas.cz/zpravy-domov/armada-mise-vychod-nato-snemovna_2209071015_cen.
6. The Baltics, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary.
7. Germany, the Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia and the USA.
8. "Česko a Polsko zabezpečí slovenský vzdušný prostor. Ministři podepsali dohodu", Česká televize, accessed September 11, 2022. <https://ct24.ceskatelevize.cz/domaci/3525210-zive-cernochova-a-nad-podepisuji-dohodu-o-ochrane-vzdušneho-prostoru-slovenska>.
9. Třetí kolo vyjednávání mezi Českou republikou a USA o DCA, accessed November 11, 2022. <https://mocr.army.cz/informacni-servis/zpravodajstvi/treti-kolo-vyjednani-mezi-ceskou-republikou-a-usa-o-dca-240399/>.
10. "Česká dezinformační scéna masivně podporuje Rusko. NATO prezentuje jako agresora | Aktuálně.cz," Aktuálně.cz - Víte, co se právě děje, February 15, 2022, accessed November 11, 2022, <https://zpravy.aktualne.cz/domaci/nato-a-eu-jako-agresori-ceska-dezinformacni-scena-masivne-po/r-ff74731a8e5411ecab010cc47ab5f122/>.

HUNGARY

NATO is the cornerstone of Hungary's national security, and the new SC is a valuable document for Budapest to guide the reinforcement and adaptation of the Alliance in a deteriorating security environment. The Hungarian government welcomed the 360-degree approach to deterrence and defense enshrined in the document, which also reflected government priorities such as the security implications of instability in the Middle East and Africa, the challenges of irregular migration, and the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Western Balkans. However, it is too early to judge whether NATO would muster the political will and/or the resources to do more together in the Southern neighborhood amid Russia's war against Ukraine.

Further, the SC reiterated the full implementation of the Defence Investment Pledge. In this regard, Hungary's Minister of Defence stated that defense spending would reach two percent of GDP already in 2023, one year before the aspirational NATO deadline.¹¹ Due to Hungary's ongoing Zrínyi 2026 Defence and Force Development Programme, the country has already surpassed the 20 percent spending target on major equipment.

One of the major decisions in Madrid was to invite Finland and Sweden to join NATO. As of November 13, 2022, only Hungary and Turkey have not yet ratified the accession protocols. In the Hungarian case, the necessary legislative proposals were submitted to the National Assembly on July 14, 2022, but the governing coalition did not schedule a vote yet, despite their supermajority. Previously, Prime Minister Orbán had previously said that the National Assembly would debate the issue, including Ankara's concerns.¹² Despite the lack of progress by early November, Swedish and Finnish officials said they were optimistic and hoped the process could conclude by mid-December.¹³ The considerable delay compared to the rest of the Alliance likely reflects Hungary's close political relationship with Turkey, rather than the intent to block the NATO accession of Finland and Sweden.

The Madrid Summit was also a major milestone for defense innovation efforts. Together with the other four countries mentioned in this chapter, Hungary became a founding member of NATO's Innovation Fund and joined DIANA through which the country will be hosting two test centers for emerging technologies.¹⁴

There is a notable contrast between the publicly stated Hungarian position on China and the consensus-based language in the SC. The latter asserts that the PRC "challenges our interests, security and values" and "strives to subvert the rules-based international order," while Hungarian officials usually refrain from publicly criticizing or condemning China. The wording in the SC is also more critical than the relevant section in Hungary's current National Security Strategy. Although the latter noted Beijing's "increasingly assertive political and military stance" as well as potential vulnerabilities related to critical infrastructure and the PRC's regional influence, it also expressed an interest in "the vigorous and pragmatic strengthening of Hungarian-Chinese relations," including through the Belt and Road Initiative.¹⁵

As NATO's adaptation enters a new phase amid heightened tensions with Russia, the Hungarian government should expeditiously ratify Sweden and Finland's accession and should support Alliance-wide measures aimed at strengthening NATO unity, otherwise the country's regional ties and reputation will suffer further damage. Over the medium-term, Hungary should seek to exploit the potential rooted in collaboration and knowledge exchange in the areas of capability development, defense industrial cooperation and strive to become a key node of Europe's defense innovation ecosystem.

11. József Spirk, "Honvédelmi miniszter: Senki nem beszél arról, hogy a dolgok rosszra is fordulhatnak [Defence Minister: no one talks about how things can go wrong]," 24.hu, July 5, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://24.hu/belfold/2022/07/05/szalay-bobrovniczky-kristof-mcc-nato-katonasag/>.
12. Viktor Orbán, "Orbán Viktor válaszai a táborlakókban felmerült kérdésekre," miniszterelnok.hu, July 23, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://miniszterelnok.hu/orban-viktor-valaszai-a-taborlakokban-felmerult-kerdesekre-3/>.
13. Anna Ringstrom and Terje Solsvik, "Finland and Sweden hopeful Hungary will ratify NATO applications," Reuters, November 2, 2022, accessed November 12, 2022: <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/finland-sweden-optimistic-hungary-will-ratify-their-nato-applications-2022-11-02/>.
14. NATO, "Updated DIANA Initial Footprint, June 2022," NATO.int, accessed September 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_f12014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/220630-diana.pdf.
15. NATO, "NATO 2022 Strategic Concept," paragraph 13, June 29, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_f12014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.

POLAND

The SC was generally welcomed both by Polish officials as well as the expert community. The document has been described as a breakthrough and the beginning of a new era for NATO. At the same time, however, the opinions have varied on its impact on actual decisions of the Alliance and its members.

Already on the first day of the Madrid Summit, Polish President Andrzej Duda called the event “a success of the whole Alliance.”¹⁶ Generally, members of the government and political establishment agreed that all the main Polish expectations concerning the SC and other adopted documents have been met.¹⁷

The immediate reactions of the analytical community in Poland are more diverse.¹⁸ Most of them agreed that the new SC reflects the dramatically changed security environment in NATO’s immediate neighborhood. As the most important elements of the new SC, the analysts underlined the emphasis on collective defense and deterrence at the expense of “out-of-area” operations, crisis management and cooperative security, and the importance of resilience and technological edge of the allies against possible adversaries and the commitment to an open-door policy.¹⁹ Fragments which explicitly name Russia as the most significant threat to the Alliance, as well as the suggestion that NATO cannot discount the possibility of a direct attack against allies’ territories were called by an analyst of the Polish Institute of International Affairs a “Copernican Rn.”²⁰ It was noted that the NATO-Russia Founding Act was not mentioned in the SC, nor in other official documents of the Summit, but there seems

to be no consensus whether NATO allies already do not feel bound by it, or simply have laid it aside as a possible point of reference for future discussion with Russia.²¹

However, there seems to be more skepticism towards the practical application of the SC. Analysts pointed out that there has been no dramatic change in conventional deterrence of the Alliance, namely no shift from “forward presence” to “forward defense” on the Eastern Flank, which was advocated by Poland and other countries of the region.²² Also, no details have been offered concerning the “New NATO Force Model.” NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg declared the buildup of the NATO Response Force from 40 to 300 thousand, but no other member confirmed these quantities during the Summit, and only Germany and Great Britain declared concrete force commitments.²³

Most strikingly, there was virtually no discussion during the Summit, and no indication thereof in official documents, on the financial aspects of doctrinal changes, let alone the increase of military spending by Member States.²⁴ One of the experts even called the NATO doctrinal approach after the Madrid Summit a “verbal deterrence” – well-formulated, yet still to be materialized in practice.²⁵

As some of the experts pointed out, the most important decisions were made on the margins, or before the Summit.²⁶ While this may offer some reason for disappointment, as one expert concluded, “this is the only NATO we have, and we should not expect a different one.”²⁷

16. Szczyt NATO w Madrycie sukcesem całego Sojuszu, <https://www.prezydent.pl/aktualnosci/wizyty-zagraniczne/i-dzien-szczytu-nato-w-madrycie-z-udzialem-prezydenta-rp,56134>, accessed September 19, 2022.

17. For details, see: Szef BBN: NATO przyjęło nową Koncepcję Strategiczną, główne polskie oczekiwania zostały spełnione, <https://www.bbn.gov.pl/wydarzenia/9438,Szef-BBN-NATO-przyjelo-nowa-Koncepcje-Strategiczna-glowne-polskie-oczekiwania-zo.html> accessed September 19, 2022. Informacja ministra spraw zagranicznych oraz ministra obrony narodowej na temat przebiegu i rezultatów Szczytu NATO w Madrycie, w dniach 28-30 czerwca 2022 r., <https://www.sejm.gov.pl/Sejm9.nsf/biuletyn.xsp?skmr=OBN-86>, transcript accessed September 19, 2022. The main focus of Minister’s Ociepa address to the joint Committees was on other results of the Summit than the SC. The official communique of the Ministry of Defence after the Summit mentioned the SC only once, without details, see: W Polsce powstanie stałe dowództwo V Korpusu Armii USA, <https://www.gov.pl/web/obrona-narodowa/w-polsce-powstanie-stale-dowodztwo-v-korpusu-armii-usa>, accessed September 19, 2022. NATO zmienia priorytety, <http://polska-zbrojna.pl/home/articleshow/37719>, accessed September 19, 2022.

18. Due to space limitations, this overview is not exhaustive and presents only selected views on the subject.

19. Justyna Gotkowska, Jacek Tarociński, “Co po Madrycie? Szczyt NATO a bezpieczeństwo wschodniej flanki”, Komentarze OSW, July 5, 2022, accessed September 19, 2022, <https://www.osw.waw.pl/pl/publikacje/komentarze-osw/2022-07-05/co-po-madrycie-szczyt-nato-a-bezpieczenstwo-wschodniej-flanki>.

20. Wojciech Lorenz, „Raport o stanie świata” Podcast, July 2, 2022, accessed September 19, 2022.

21. See for instance: Justyna Gotkowska, Jacek Tarociński, op. cit.; Wojciech Lorenz „Szczyt NATO w Madrycie – odpowiedź na agresywną politykę Rosji”, Biuletyn PISM, No. 114 (2533), July 15, 2022, accessed September 19, 2022, <https://pism.pl/publikacje/szczyt-nato-w-madrycie-odpowiedz-na-agresywna-polityke-rosji>.

22. Justyna Gotkowska, Jacek Tarociński, op. cit. It was noted that the increase in troops deployment on the Eastern flank was rather a unilateral American decision than an outcome of the Summit, let alone the consequence of the SC.

23. Justyna Gotkowska, Andrzej Kohut, “Czy Szczyt NATO w Madrycie był historyczny?”, OSW Podcast, July 1, 2022, New Force Model: NATO verstärkt schnelle Eingreifkräfte, <https://www.bmvg.de/de/aktuelles/new-force-model-nato-verstaerkt-schnelle-eingreifkraefte-5456976>; UK to make more forces available to NATO to counter future threats, accessed September 19, 2022. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-make-more-forces-available-to-nato-to-counter-future-threats>.

24. Marek Świerczyński, Andrzej Bobiński, „Życie po Madrycie”, Polityka Insight Podcast, July 1, 2022.

25. Ibidem.

26. Marek Świerczyński in ibidem. Most notably, one should mention the trilateral agreement between Turkey, Finland, and Sweden, which allowed for a formal invitation to join the Alliance for the latter two countries. Or the US announcements of the plans to strengthen both permanent and rotational presence of military personnel and equipment on the Eastern Flank.

27. Marek Świerczyński in ibidem.

ROMANIA

The new Strategic Concept stated what Romania has known for a long time, namely that “the Russian Federation is the most significant and direct threat to the security of NATO members and to peace and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area.”²⁸

Romania is a strategic NATO ally and the second-largest country on the Eastern flank after Poland. Integration into NATO was a national objective, and when this was achieved in 2004, Romania finally felt that it had become an equal and important partner in the European security landscape. Since 2017, Romania has allocated two percent of its GDP to the defense budget, understanding the need to strengthen the perception of allies’ hard power as a deterrence tool.²⁹ In March 2022, the Presidential Administration announced an increase in defense spending to 2.5 percent of its GDP, in the wake of the Russian invasion of Ukraine, following a decision by the Supreme Council of National Defence (CSAT).³⁰

For Romania, 32 years after the revolution, resentment towards its communist past remains strong, and Russia remains the main threat to national security. Therefore, an overwhelming majority of Romanians (77 percent) believe that the right direction for their country, politically and militarily, is westwards, with only a tenth of those surveyed preferring the eastern geopolitical landscape.³¹

Russia’s illegal invasion of neighboring Ukraine has prompted Romania to take a hard look at the danger of escalation beyond Ukraine’s borders. Romanian Foreign

Minister Bogdan Aurescu welcomed the new SC adopted at the Madrid Summit as a fundamental milestone in the evolution of the Alliance. China was listed in the SC as a systemic adversary, being mentioned once, but for Romania, China remains a non-topic and is not mentioned in the national defense strategy.³²

Concerning the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO, Romania is a firm supporter of NATO enlargement, the Romanian Parliament ratified the accession protocols on July 20, 2022. Criticism came solely from the far right, a group that occupies about 40 of the 465 seats in the Parliament and does not have any impact on Romania’s external affairs.³³ Among experts, there is a consensus on the need to bolster NATO’s capabilities, but also concerns regarding possible reactions from Russia.

To conclude, the SC did not spark public debate. However, both the Foreign Ministry and the Presidential Administration are aligned on the matter and insist on additional NATO troops in Romania, the strengthening of the Eastern Flank, the creation of four new Battle Groups, and the definition of the Black Sea as a strategic area of interest for NATO.³⁴ The Republic of Moldova remains a priority, as Romania is Moldova’s closest partner and ally.³⁵ The Romanian authorities should create more opportunities for discussion between citizens and NATO representatives, as a preventive measure against disinformation attempts.

28. NATO, “NATO 2022 Strategic Concept,” June 29, 2022, accessed September 14, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.
29. “Strategia Națională de Apărare a Țării pentru perioada 2020-2024”, Administrația prezidențială, 2020, accessed September 29, 2022, https://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/Documente/Strategia_Nationala_de_Aparare_a_Tarii_2020_2024.pdf.
30. Cristian, A., “Decizii CSAT | Iohannis: Majorăm cheltuielile pentru apărare la 2.5% din PIB, România devine hub al ajutorului umanitar”, Europa Libera Romania, accessed September 29, 2022, <https://romania.europalibera.org/a/decizii-csat-iohannis-cheltuielile-pentru-aparare-l2-5-din-pib/31730305.html>.
31. Editorial, “Neîncrederea publică: Vest vs. Est, ascensiunea curentului naționalist în era dezinformării și fenomenului știrilor false – Ediția a IV-a. Capitolul 1: Securitate militară. Capitolul 2: Vest vs. Est, Încrederea în țări și lideri internaționali,” INSCOP Research, accessed September 16, 2022, <https://www.inscop.ro/ianuarie-2022-neincrederea-publica-vest-vs-est-ascensiunea-curentului-nationalist-in-era-dezinformarii-si-fenomenului-stirilor-false-editia-a-iv-a-capitolul-1-securitate-militara-capi/>.
32. Press Release, “Madrid Summit Declaration”, NATO, 2022, accessed September 29, 2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_196951.htm.
33. Editorial, “George Simion, critic la aderarea Finlandei la NATO! Țara s-a opus intrării României în Schengen”, BZI, July 20, 2022, accessed September 29, 2022, <https://www.bzi.ro/george-simion-critic-la-aderarea-finlandei-la-nato-tara-s-a-opus-intrarii-romaniei-in-schengen-4504537>.
34. Pecheanu, G., Bogdan Aurescu: Suplimentarea trupelor aliate, o decizie în favoarea intereselor României”, MediaFax, June 30, 2022, accessed September 29, 2022, <https://www.mediafax.ro/politic/romania-a-luat-decizia-de-a-intervenii-in-favoarea-ucrainei-la-cedo-in-cauza-impotriva-rusiei-21167854>.
35. Editorial, “SONDAJ A crescut încrederea românilor în NATO, UE și Germania / Peste 70% cred că România va fi apărată de NATO în cazul unui război în Ucraina / Liderii lumii în care oamenii au cea mai mare încredere”, HotNews.ro, January 26, 2022, accessed September 29, 2022, <https://www.hotnews.ro/stiri-esential-25327336-sondaj-crescut-increderea-romanilor-nato-germania-peste-70-cred-romania-aparata-nato-cazul-unui-razboi-ucraina-liderii-lumii-care-oamenii-cea-mai-mare-incredere.htm>.

SLOVAKIA

From Slovakia's perspective, it has been a clear priority for the SC to highlight mainly the importance of collective defense as the primary objective to maintain the stability and security of NATO allies.³⁶ This has been achieved and affirmed in the new SC. In response to Russia's unjustified and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, it was crucial for Slovakia to emphasize the importance of designating Russia as an aggressor in the new SC.³⁷ While the previous SC of 2010 envisaged Russia as a "strategic partner," the new document identifies Russia as the most significant and direct threat to peace, stability, and security in the Euro-Atlantic area.³⁸

Based on material submitted jointly by the Minister of Foreign and European Affairs and the Minister of Defence prior to the Madrid Summit, among the most significant Slovak priorities in the light of current events was to strengthen NATO's readiness to defend its members, particularly on NATO's Eastern Flank.³⁹ According to Defence Minister Jaroslav Nad', today's security situation requires that the forward deterrence presence on NATO's Eastern Flank be transformed into a permanent forward defense - including an increase in the size and form of the military presence in the region.⁴⁰

Slovakia supports the assessment of the PRC's assertive behavior, mainly in the context of hybrid and cyber operations, disinformation, and the PRC's confrontational rhetoric.⁴¹ The SC responds to the unprecedentedly significant challenges in the field of building societal resilience - namely in the information domain, cyberspace, and the field of emerging and disruptive technologies, posing both opportunities and risks within the NATO Alliance.⁴²

In terms of defense spending, the Slovak government has reaffirmed its commitment to allocate two percent

of GDP on defense and intends to exceed this threshold by 2024.⁴³ The Ministry of Defence has the ambition to exceed NATO's commitment by modernizing military equipment and purchasing new equipment, such as the newly certified CV90 infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs), which would eventually substitute the old Soviet-designed IFVs.⁴⁴

Regarding NATO's Open Door Policy, Slovakia is convinced that Finland and Sweden meet all the criteria for membership and will strengthen collective defense and security in Europe. Bratislava also supports the Euro-Atlantic aspirations of Ukraine, Georgia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁵ The National Council of the Slovak Republic decided on the membership of the two Nordic countries in its last session on September 27, 2022. An overwhelming majority approved the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO. Apart from a few individuals from various political parties, only members of the two minor far-right parties were against the membership. The Slovak President ratified the accession of the two member states the day following the vote in the Parliament.⁴⁶

In conclusion, given the abrupt changes in the global security environment, NATO, as a political and military alliance whose main task is to ensure the protection and promotion of peace, stability and security, must continue to strengthen its readiness for collective deterrence and defense of the Alliance. However, it must be noted that NATO's political unity is being undermined by the recent rise of illiberal and nationalist practices in its member states. Slovakia, which has long been a target of disinformation, should strengthen its strategic communication with the public, including the younger generation.⁴⁷ The persistent strong presence of Russian propaganda and the lack of information about NATO are one of the main threats that need to be considered when preparing the communication campaigns conducted by the Slovak Ministry of Defence.⁴⁸

36. Jaroslav Nad', "Defence Minister Nad' in Brussels: NATO makes collective defence and deterrence its priority," mosr.sk, 16 June 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://www.mosr.sk/51629-en/minister-nad-v-bruseli-odstranenie-a-kolektivna-obrana-je-prioritou-aliancie/>.

37. Účasť a priority Slovenskej republiky na samite NATO v Madride (28. - 30. júna 2022), rokovania.gov.sk, 15 June 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/27377/1>.

38. Juraj Sýkora, "Rusko už oficiálne nie je pre NATO partner, ale hrozba," sfpa.sk, July 19, 2022, accessed September 14, 2022. <https://www.sfpa.sk/zppost/rusko-uz-oficialne-nie-je-pre-nato-partner-ale-hrozba/?fbclid=IwAR1LJaQ9j3HOI35yHZdg6eRH8UzVGSd3v8pmZISxjtW6RmJGKgCEoIW6sPI>.

39. Účasť a priority Slovenskej republiky na samite NATO v Madride (28. - 30. júna 2022), rokovania.gov.sk, June 15, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022,

40. Jaroslav Nad', "Defence Minister Nad' in Brussels: NATO makes collective defence and deterrence its priority," mosr.sk, 16 June 2022, accessed 13 September 2022, <https://www.mosr.sk/51629-en/minister-nad-v-bruseli-odstranenie-a-kolektivna-obrana-je-prioritou-aliancie/>.

41. Účasť a priority Slovenskej republiky na samite NATO v Madride (28. - 30. júna 2022), rokovania.gov.sk, June 15, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, <https://www.mosr.sk/51629-en/minister-nad-v-bruseli-odstranenie-a-kolektivna-obrana-je-prioritou-aliancie/>.

42. NATO, "NATO 2022 Strategic Concept," paragraph 17, June 29, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022, https://www.nato.int/nato_static_files2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf

43. Účasť a priority Slovenskej republiky na samite NATO v Madride (28. - 30. júna 2022), rokovania.gov.sk, June 15, 2022, accessed September 13, 2022.

44. Účasť a priority Slovenskej republiky na samite NATO v Madride (28. - 30. júna 2022).

45. Juraj Sýkora, "Rusko už oficiálne nie je pre NATO partner, ale hrozba," sfpa.sk, July 19, 2022, accessed September 14, 2022, <https://www.sfpa.sk/zppost/rusko-uz-oficialne-nie-je-pre-nato-partner-ale-hrozba/?fbclid=IwAR1LJaQ9j3HOI35yHZdg6eRH8UzVGSd3v8pmZISxjtW6RmJGKgCEoIW6sPI>.

46. TASR, "Prezidentka ratifikovala vstup Švédska a Fínska do NATO," aktuality.sk, September 28, 2022, accessed September 30, 2022, <https://www.aktuality.sk/clanok/URGIB5o/prezidentka-ratifikovala-vstup-svedska-a-finska-do-nato/>.

47. SFPA, "NATO 2030 - analýza vybraných problémov," sfpa.sk, accessed November 16, 2022, [NATO 2030 - analýza vybraných problémov](https://www.sfpa.sk/nato-2030-analyza-vybranych-problemov).

48. Adam Bučko, "Strategická komunikácia v sektore obrany SR," 2019, stratpol.sk, accessed November 18, 2022, [STRATEGICKÁ KOMUNIKÁCIA V SEKTORE OBRANY SR](https://www.stratpol.sk/strategicka-komunikacia-v-sektore-obrany-sr).

CONCLUSIONS

The 2022 Strategic Concept is a forward-looking document guiding the Alliance's adaptation amid emerging security threats and challenges. This last section explores commonalities and divergences between how these five Central and Eastern European countries regard the contents and implications of the SC.

The renewed and reinforced commitment to deterrence and collective defense continues to be the foundation of the security and stability of this region. The five countries share an interest in strengthening the Eastern Flank of the Alliance, including through the rotational deployment of multinational battlegroups. At the same time, NATO continues to maintain a 360-degree approach to collective defense instead of focusing only on its Eastern Flank. Of these five countries, Hungary is the most vocal about the Southern strategic direction. The approach to China in the SC appears to be a compromise, but it is still notable that similar to the 2021 Brussels Communiqué, the consensus-based language is stronger than the usual public positions of certain individual allies, such as Poland, Hungary and Romania.

All five countries are increasing their defense expenditures and are in the process of procuring a range of modern defense capabilities. In previous years, Poland and Romania already surpassed the NATO-wide spending target of at least two percent of GDP on defense. Hungary will reach this target in 2023, while the Czech Republic and Slovakia will do so in 2024.

All five countries are founding members of both NATO's Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic and the Innovation Fund. Participation in these collaborative initiatives focuses on dual-use technologies and is

expected to boost the innovation ecosystems in the countries, and thus, bolster the collective technological edge and interoperability of NATO.

The invitation to Finland and Sweden to join NATO and reaffirming NATO's Open Door Policy were historical milestones of the Madrid Summit. The Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia are among the 28 allies who have already ratified the accession protocols. Even though Hungary also supports the Open Door Policy, the timeline of ratification by Budapest is still uncertain. The Hungarian government vowed to examine Turkish concerns before deciding, even though the country is not expected to block the process.

In conclusion, this chapter presented the positions of the five Central and Eastern European countries on NATO's new Strategic Concept and highlighted relevant developments. The chapter also contains a number of country-specific recommendations. In the case of the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Romania, the recommendations focus on developing a communication strategy related to their strengthened NATO involvement in an information environment impacted by hostile disinformation campaigns. While this also concerns Hungary, more urgent priorities for Budapest would ideally include strengthening NATO's unity by ratifying Sweden and Finland's accession and remedying regional ties concerning its positions in the context of Russia's war against Ukraine.

As NATO continues to adapt and make changes to its posture, including on its Eastern Flank, the CEE countries will have a crucial role to play in shaping this process over the medium term.

POLITICAL COOPERATION FORMATS

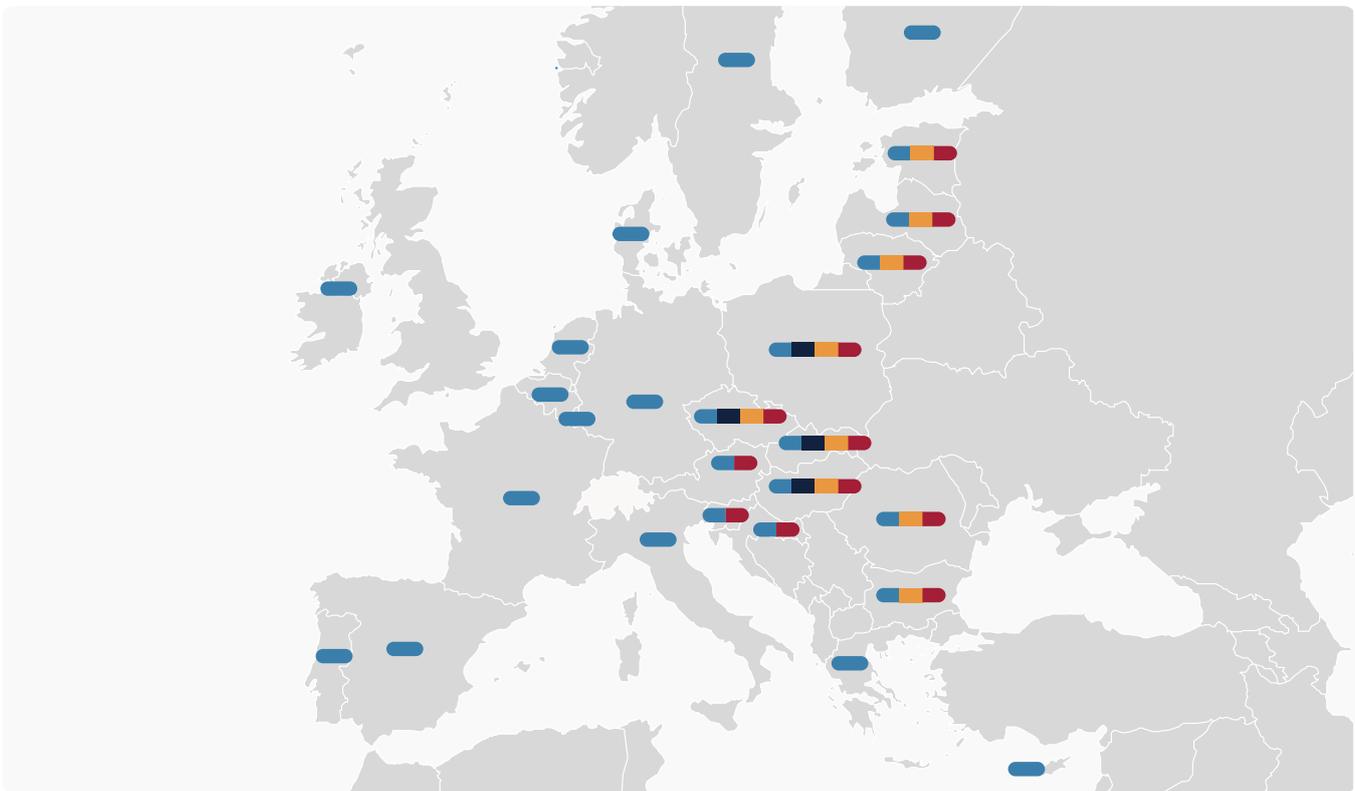
Zoltan Lukacs, Dora Szilagyi, Michael Richter, Julian Zelaznowski, Daniel Gheorghe

Transatlantic security is based on political cooperation formats that provide both formal security guarantees and strengthen political, economic, and social links among participating countries. The primary role belongs to NATO, but a substantial role is played by the European Union (EU), especially in terms of mitigating conflicts between European countries. Additionally, the Three Seas Initiative (3SI), Bucharest Nine (B9), and the Visegrád Group (V4) play the role of strengthening ties in CEE (Central and Eastern Europe) and offer a political counterbalance to

the economically stronger, Western European countries, which made Europe more dependent on Russian natural resources.

In the following chapter, the point of reference is NATO and the question of how the political formats (EU, 3SI, B9, and V4) affect Transatlantic security. We will explore the answer to this central question by defining the current state of these formats and their future impact.

POLITICAL FORMATS (EU, 3SI, B9, AND V4) AS OF SPRING 2022:



European Union (EU) consists of 27 member states,

Three Seas Initiative (3SI) – twelve states (Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia),

Bucharest Nine (B9) – nine states (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia),

Visegrád Group (V4) – four states (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia).

NATO & EU ENLARGEMENT

EU enlargement remains relevant in the current European political context, after almost 20 years since the integration of ten Central and Eastern-European countries as well as Cyprus. The discussions surrounding the candidates in the Western Balkans – Albania, North Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia – as well as of the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in the context created by the Russian invasion of

Ukraine, continue to challenge EU leaders. Additionally, given the strong influence of the war in Ukraine, the discussion on furthering EU membership becomes even more relevant. The current context raises concerns not only related to EU internal issues such as gas imports, but also, to regional security.

UKRAINE BECOMES OFFICIAL EU MEMBERSHIP CANDIDATE

European Union members and membership candidates

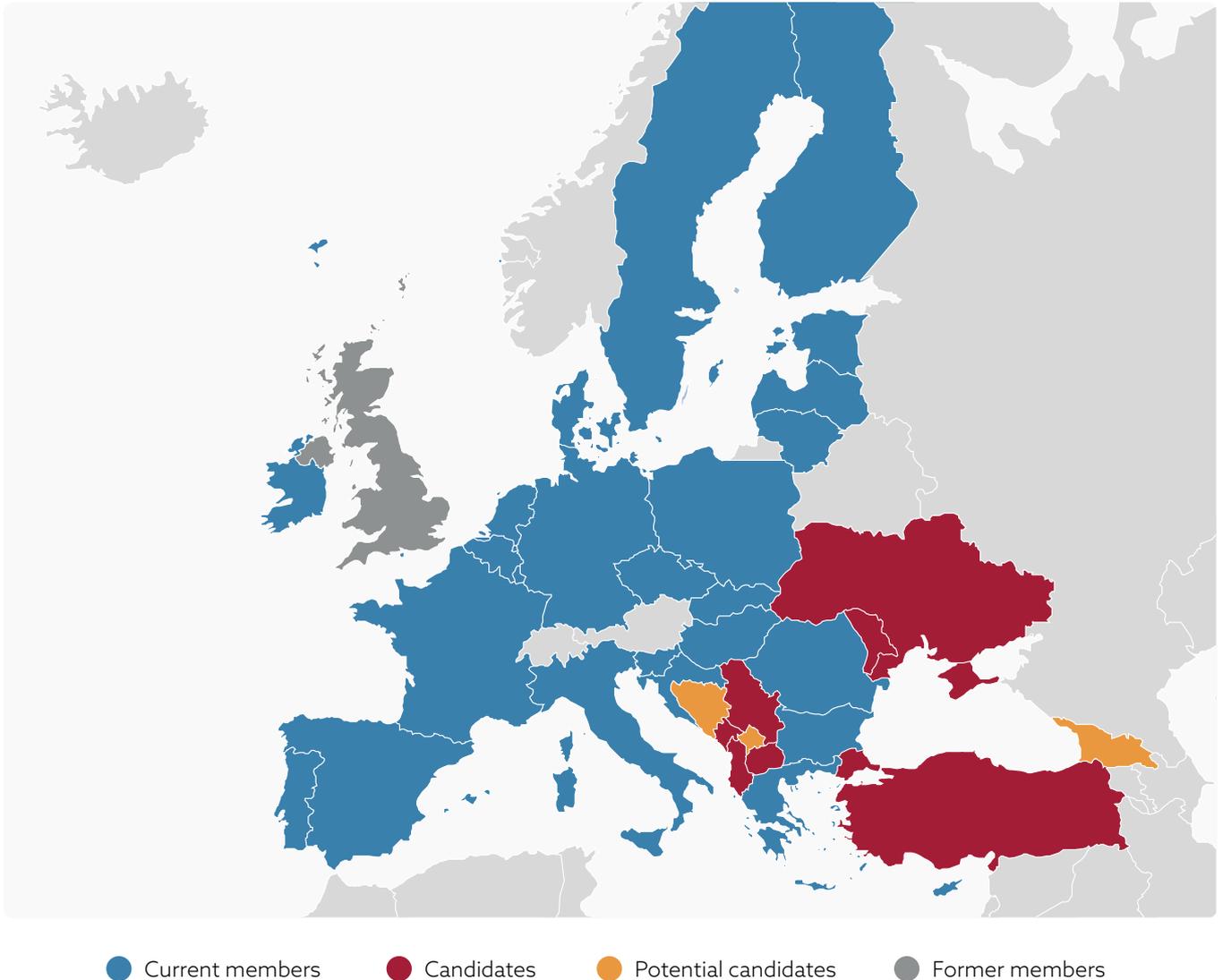


Figure 1: Ukraine Becomes Official EU Membership Candidate⁴⁹

49. Fleck, Anna. "Ukraine Becomes Official EU Membership Candidate." Statista, June 24, 2022. <https://www.statista.com/chart/27678/eu-member-states-and-candidates/>.

The current context has the potential to re-shape the concept of integration. It can be speculated over the fact that a certain evolution of integration would change anyway, for which the existence of the EU neighborhood is proof. As the EU was long considered a “sleeping giant”, the EU neighborhood represented an intermediary step for the countries seeking EU membership.⁵⁰ Significant pressure from events like the Arab Spring, the eruption and continuation of the civil war in Syria, the emergence of the Islamic State, the Euromaidan Revolution, and the subsequent Russian annexation of Crimea, followed by the emergence of territorial conflict between pro-Russian separatists and Ukrainian military and paramilitary forces in eastern parts of Ukraine etc., the changing character of the idea of integration became even more apparent as major security threats continued to evolve.⁵¹

In respect to the security aspect, things also changed, and the new context generated by the Russian invasion in Ukraine represents proof of that change. Since Ukraine and Moldova were accepted as candidates for EU membership, the usual habit of having a future EU member become a member of NATO first seems to not apply anymore. This precedent seems to not apply anymore only to those EU members that are not part of NATO. In the new context, Moldova and Ukraine were granted candidate status, thus adding to the new pattern of countries that have the possibility of becoming EU members without becoming NATO members first. While these cases do not necessarily represent a novelty, they are different. Additionally, it is debatable to what extent the new context determined by the war in Ukraine adds to the pace of these countries becoming members of the EU.

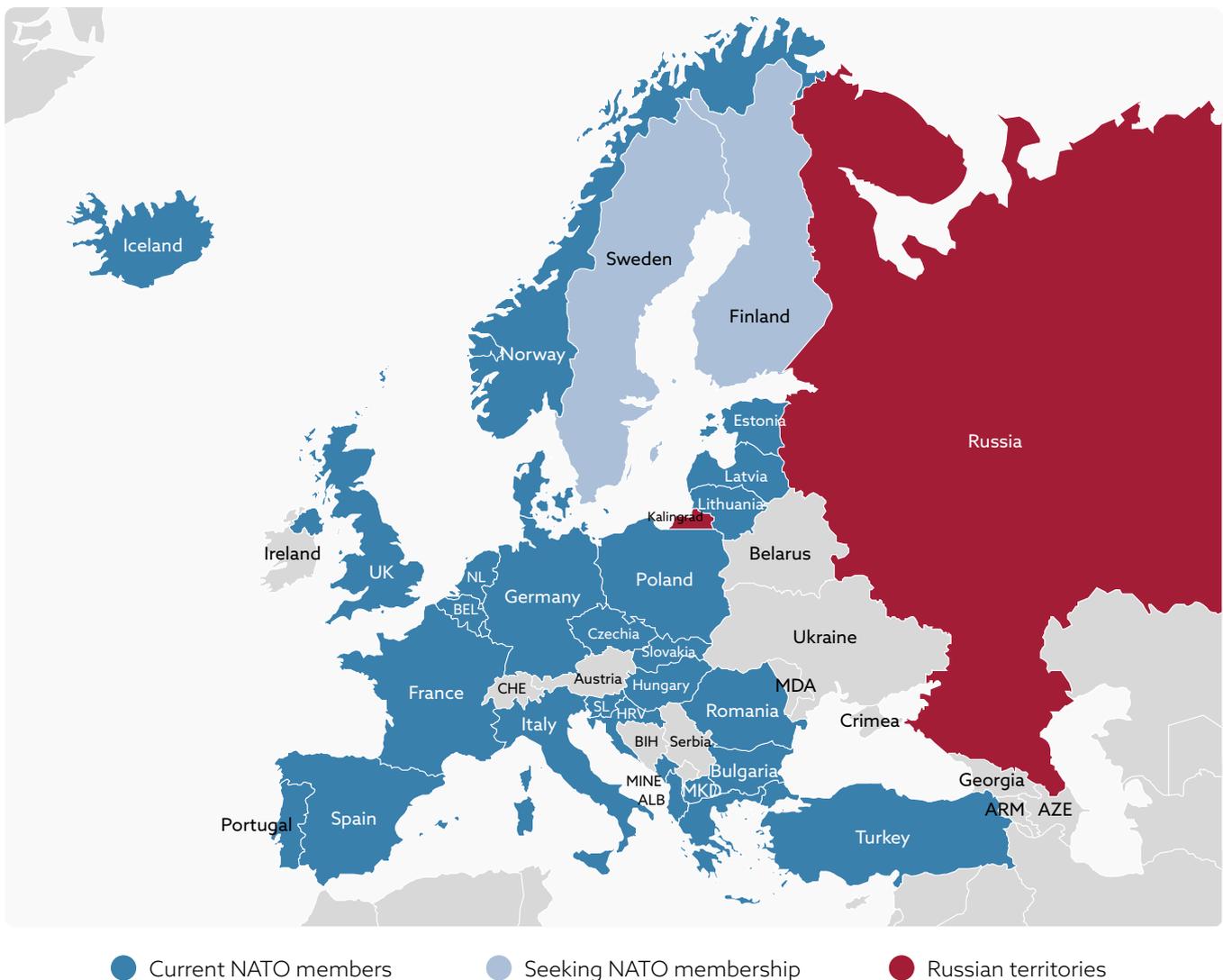


Figure 2: NATO Members and Candidates⁵²

50. Van der Eeijk, C. & Franklin, M.N. (2004). Potential for contestation on European matters at national elections in Europe. In G. Marks & M.R. Steenbergen (eds), *European integration and political conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

51. Bouris, D., & Schumacher, T. (Eds.). (2017). *The revised European neighbourhood policy: Continuity and change in EU foreign policy*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

52. Turak, Natasha. 'The Stakes Are Now Massive': Turkey is Threatening to Block NATO Membership for Sweden and Finland. CNBC, May 17, 2022. <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/05/17/will-turkey-block-nato-membership-for-sweden-and-finland.html>.

The element that generates this debate is represented by the membership of the countries in the Eastern Partnership, which includes the EU as well as Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine. While this membership cannot be equated with the effective steps involved by the candidate status, it signaled the European aspirations of these countries long before the conflict in Ukraine started. The behavior and ambitions of these countries, however, can be contrasted with that of Serbia, another country from the region aiming at EU membership. Due to Serbia's strong relations with Russia, and both Russia and Serbia's easy access to Kosovo, Serbia puts itself in a complex context that does not allow a faster integration of it in the EU.

The current context has also influenced the internal political and economic dynamic in the EU. This is visible in the contrast between the attitudes of Germany, Hungary, Italy, and France towards Russia versus those of Poland, Czech Republic, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Romania. One can easily understand that we are witnessing not only a transformation of the concept of EU integration, but also a change in the dynamics of power within the EU. This change can be regarded as the main transformational element in relation to EU integration.

THREE SEAS INITIATIVE

The 3SI refers to the historic Intermarium idea, a geopolitical concept of a close alliance of countries between the Baltic, Black, and Adriatic Sea. Historically, the rationale for this alliance was rooted in a critical, geopolitical weight that all countries together would generate vis-à-vis their Eastern (Russia) and Western (Germany) neighbors.⁵³ Interestingly, despite it being a century since the 3SI first emerged, the initial reason for pursuing this concept is almost identical with the project's *raison d'être* in the present. The underlying idea of bringing many different small and medium-sized countries of the region together paradoxically also constitutes the main development obstacle of the 3SI.

The initiative seeks to fill missing linkages on the North-South axis in the CEE region. Traditionally, commercial and transport connections in this region ran in the West-East direction, either in the form of industrial supply chains to and from Germany or energy supplies primarily from Russia. While the 3SI's objective of increasing connectivity in the industrial sphere, and hence becoming less dependent on Germany, serves primarily economic development and diversification considerations, a move away from Russia

carries a strategic security rationale. In this respect, the 3SI intends to push regional infrastructure projects to generate synergies between its member countries and decrease dependencies, particularly dependency on Russia in the energy sphere. A significant importance is therefore paid to critical infrastructure, such as gas pipelines and LNG terminals, but also to roads and railways.

However, just as the Intermarium historically sought to create a geopolitical counterweight in Europe, the focus of the 3SI limits its potential as it depends on different actors sharing the same vision in this sphere. In the interwar period, this concept was most vehemently pushed by Poland, due to its size and location. Today, Poland arguably remains the project's most fierce promoter.⁵⁴ Yet, this concept still relies on external support, most notably that of the US. The 3SI enjoyed significant backing from Washington under the Trump administration. However, President Biden toned down its commitment to this project.

Not only was the initial US-funding for this project reduced from an announced \$1 billion to \$300 million, but the most recent Riga Summit was held without any high-level representative from the current administration. Furthermore, 3SI is also dependent on the internal cohesion of its members. As cooperation is based entirely on voluntary commitments and actions of the participating countries, the sheer diversity of states and their interests make it very difficult for the group to make unanimous decisions. For instance, while Austria opposed energy independence projects, such as LNG terminals, countries like Poland and Croatia supported and developed them.⁵⁵

Despite these limitations, the current reality in Europe might be working in favor of this project. The lead principle of the 3SI is the smallest common denominator. And as the Russian invasion of Ukraine led to many substantial changes in the perception of Moscow as a partner, a renewed effort towards real energy independence started in many countries. Almost all countries in the region openly committed to move away from Russian gas, which could create strong momentum for the 3SI. Furthermore, after the invasion of Ukraine, Kyiv was de-facto admitted as a participating country to the initiative. The 3SI, bringing together some of the biggest supporters of Kyiv, might play a significant role in the reconstruction and integration efforts of Ukraine. This stems from the geographical position of the countries involved, a significant synergy potential between these countries, as well as the new geopolitical reality created by the Russian invasion.

53. Carafano, J. J. (2022, August 10). The untapped potential of the Three Seas Initiative. Global Intelligence Service. <https://www.gisreportsonline.com/r/three-seas-initiative-2/>

54. Soroka, G., & Stępniewski, T. (2019). The Three Seas Initiative: Geopolitical Determinants and Polish Interests. *Yearbook of the Institute of East-Central Europe*, 17(3), 15-29.

55. Górka, M. (2018). The three seas initiative as a political challenge for the countries of central and eastern Europe. *Politics in Central Europe*, 14(3), 55-73.

BUCHAREST NINE

The Bucharest Nine (B9) is a regional initiative created in 2015, launched by Poland and Romania in the aftermath of the 2014 illegal annexation of the Crimean Peninsula by Russia.

The states in the region which were once occupied by the USSR or experienced Soviet influence in the so-called Eastern Bloc were concerned about the neglect of the basic principles of international law and the steps taken by Russia. Although these states became members of the EU and NATO, they felt the need for unification and to draw extra attention to the risks present in the region. The members of Bucharest Nine are Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, and Slovakia.

The Joint Declaration signed by the allies underlines the common goal to secure, where it is necessary, a "robust, credible, and sustainable Allied military presence" in the region.

Apart from risks caused by Russia's threatening behavior in the immediate neighborhood, another factor that brings together the participants in this initiative is their willingness to increase defense spending to two percent of their GDP - as recommended for all NATO member states in compliance with the strategic target set at the Alliance's summit in Wales in 2014 - in order to improve the security situation in the region both through regional cooperation and by engaging global leaders, such as the United States, in the region's security agenda.⁵⁶

The unfortunate turn of events, the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, has confirmed the threat sensed by the allies, and the existence of the B9 format is more legitimate and needed than ever. Since 2015, the B9 states have reunited several times and at various levels. The last B9 summit took place in Bucharest on June 10, 2022, in which among the heads of state of the initiative, Secretary General

Jens Stoltenberg also participated via videoconference. In the Declaration issued following the summit, the allies reiterated their "strong condemnation of Russia's unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine, with the complicity of Belarus and using the Black Sea as a launch pad, which is a brutal assault on the rules-based international order, which caused one of the most serious security crises in Europe in decades".⁵⁷

The leaders of the B9 have emphasized that serious and consistent steps were taken by the member countries in response to the Russian aggression, such as increasing NATO presence across the entire Eastern Flank, from the Baltic to the Black Sea, establishing four new battlegroups in Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia, and strengthened its existing battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland.

The B9 heads of state have formulated some directives and targets for their close cooperation in the future. This includes, significantly strengthening the deterrence and defense posture towards a modern Forward Defense, in a balanced, credible and tailored manner across the entire Eastern Flank, considering national specificities in accordance with the 360-degree approach, in order to deny any adversary, the benefits of aggression. The participants have also agreed that there is a continuous need to scale up multi-domain Allied presence, ensure interoperable combat-ready forces in peacetime, timely reinforced by forces, fires, and effects, enhance command and control arrangements, strengthen air and missile defense, improve infrastructure, military mobility, and sustainable access to fuel supply chain.

The scale of readiness suggests the awareness of a significant threat the states face in the region in the upcoming period considering the challenges and consequences already caused by Russian aggression in the neighborhood.

56. Gerasymchuk, S. (2019). Bucharest Nine: Looking for Cooperation on NATO's Eastern Flank. Foreign Policy Council Ukrainian Prism.

57. Romanian Presidency (2022, June 10). Declaration of the Heads of State Bucharest 9 Meeting [press release]. <https://www.presidency.ro/en/media/press-releases/declaration-of-the-heads-of-state-bucharest-9-meeting-bucharest-june-10-2022>

VISEGRÁD GROUP

The name of the Visegrád Group comes from the Hungarian city Visegrád, which used to be the capital of the Hungarian Kingdom as well as the meeting point between the Czech, Polish, and Hungarian kings, and rulers. The modern V4 was founded in 1991, after the fall of the Soviet Union by the representatives of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, the Republic of Hungary, and the Republic of Poland. The aim of this new organization was and is to be an efficient and effective instrument for its member states to achieve their goals at the international and European level. The V4 is not a military nor an economic alliance but rather a loose alliance to have better and bigger power projection in different policies and areas. It is an efficient tool to enhance and start a dialogue between the four member states.

Their original aim was to create a steppingstone to membership into NATO and the EU. This was a success for Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic who joined the two organizations in the '90s and 00s. After the goals of the V4 cooperation format were openly questioned by many state actors, the cooperation itself prevailed after the member states renewed their aims in the 2004 V4 declaration. This new document was a turning point for the V4 cooperation format. According to the accepted text, "the co-operation of the Visegrád Group countries will continue to focus on regional activities and initiatives aimed at strengthening the identity of the Central European region; in this context, their co-operation will be based on concrete projects and will maintain its flexible and open character".⁵⁸ Apart from this, the V4 is also a useful platform and tool to strengthen the four-member state's status and position in the European Union's decision-making process.

The V4 combined is already the 5th largest economy in Europe and has the 3rd largest population in the EU. Many economists are already calling the region the economic motor of the European Union because of its constant growth. As a result, the V4 cooperation form can be appealing to many other Central-Eastern European EU member states as well. In the past, the V4 regularly held V4+ meetings with Austria or Germany, for example. The expansion of the Visegrad Fours into Fives or Sixes is a constant topic at the annual meetings. The potential candidates currently are Croatia, Romania, Bulgaria, and the Baltic States. Many argue that with a bigger

cooperation, the countries can have a more efficient tool to influence the European Union's decision making. Others argue against the enlargement of the V4 because there are already certain topics and policies which even the current four member states cannot agree to, and an enlargement would only cause further division between the members. On the other hand, the V4 is supporting the expansion of the European Union: "Underlining the V4 countries' strong support for the integration of the Western Balkans into the European Union as well as an active contribution to the initiation and development of the European Union's Eastern Partnership as an important pillar of the European Neighborhood Policy."

SUMMARY

Central and Eastern European countries showed a historical responsibility and will play a vital role in the future of European security, especially if we consider the speed of economic growth of CEE and the increase of defense spending. While EU and the V4 are mainly economic and political alliances, 3SI and B9 work strongly towards strengthening regional security.

Recent events have accelerated international processes, including NATO and EU enlargement. Moreover, it gave a positive impetus towards closer cooperation within 3SI and B9, giving a deeper meaning and greater impact to joint efforts.

Due to the long memory of the resistance against totalitarianism, which had its origins in Germany and Russia, the CEE countries diagnose the geopolitical situation more precisely. Germany's backing of Russia's energy plans which now, even more clearly, are part of the hybrid warfare, are one of the main reasons of instability in Europe. Further, the CEE countries acted against those political and economic ties, forecasting additional aggression and destabilization of the continent caused by Russia. Then, after those projections materialized, the previously mentioned political formats positively influenced the directions of the international efforts during Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The visible distinction in the ability to put valid diagnosis and address the adequate reaction of the CEE and the Western Europe shows that further integration and development of the region is necessary for global stability.

58. Bendarzewskij, A. (2021). The Future Prospects Of the V4. Danube Institute

STRENGTHENING SOCIETAL RESILIENCE IN CENTRAL-EASTERN EUROPE

Matej Spisak, Daniel Szeligowski, Andras Sztaneff, Michaela Zelenanska

INTRODUCTION

The last decade has witnessed an emergence of resiliency as a key paradigm in international relations. Resilience constitutes a founding pillar of both NATO's 2022 Strategic Concept and the EU's 2015 Global Strategy. As defined by the UN Office for Disaster and Risk Reduction, "resilience" is "the ability of a system, community, or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform, and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions."⁵⁹

Further, resilience emphasizes risk management rather than threat prevention. It acknowledges that completely eliminating shocks has become impossible. Therefore, there is a need for adaptation and a flexible response to return to an equilibrium *ex ante*. Resilience accents a bottom-up approach to building internal capacities and capabilities necessary to deal with uncertainties instead of externally driven changes and assistance. A truly positive and sustainable transformation may only be home-grown and requires local ownership as well as a long-term approach.

Social resilience requires three main types of capacities – coping, adaptive, and transformative ones. A resilient society is one that can cope with and overcome a shock, learn from past experience, and adjust itself to future shocks, as well as build a set of sustainable institutions that are prepared to meet future challenges. Unlike stability, which relies upon preservation of political and social order, resilience is transformative and adaptive in its nature, and as such embraces political and social change in times of crisis.

PUBLIC TRUST

Public trust is the foundation of legitimate democratic governments. The OECD defines "trust" as "an important indicator to measure how people perceive the quality of, and how they associate with, government institutions in democratic countries."⁶⁰ Public trust is crucial in promoting democracy, as without it, citizens question the government and its actions. In other words, public compliance with official policies and legitimizing the democratic government through public trust is essential.

According to the World Bank, societies with a higher public trust are more resilient in times of crisis.⁶¹ In recent years, governments have been reminded that public trust is a necessary component to overcome complex and multilayered crises, including pandemics, wars, and food insecurities. However, public trust is relatively unstable - policymakers must pay attention to the changing needs of the citizens and new challenges, including corruption and interest groups. Once trust is lost, it is complicated for the governments to regain it. The literature explains declining trust is often based on individual or institutional factors.

59. UNDRR, Resilience. Terminology. Accessed January 24, 2022. <https://www.undrr.org/terminology/resilience>.

60. OECD, Building Trust to Reinforce Democracy: Main Findings from the 2021 OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions. <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/b407f99c-en/1/3/1/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/b407f99c-en&csp=c12e05718c887e57d9519eb8c987718b&itemIGO=oecd&itemContentType=book>

61. World Bank, To respond to crises, governments need effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. <https://blogs.worldbank.org/governance/respond-crises-governments-need-effective-accountable-and-inclusive-institutions>

Due to a mix of social, economic, and cultural factors, Eastern Europeans show lower levels of trust in the political system and institutions than those in Western Europe. Public trust in the region plummeted during the pandemic, which has affected people's perception of the governments' ability to address long-term challenges, including climate change and economic decline. Countries

that perform better in democracy quality indexes show a higher satisfaction with the governance system, with the Czech Republic performing the best among the Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) countries.⁶² Nevertheless, low levels of trust in the institutions are not necessarily reflected in an authoritarian turn, and people in the region continue to support democracy.

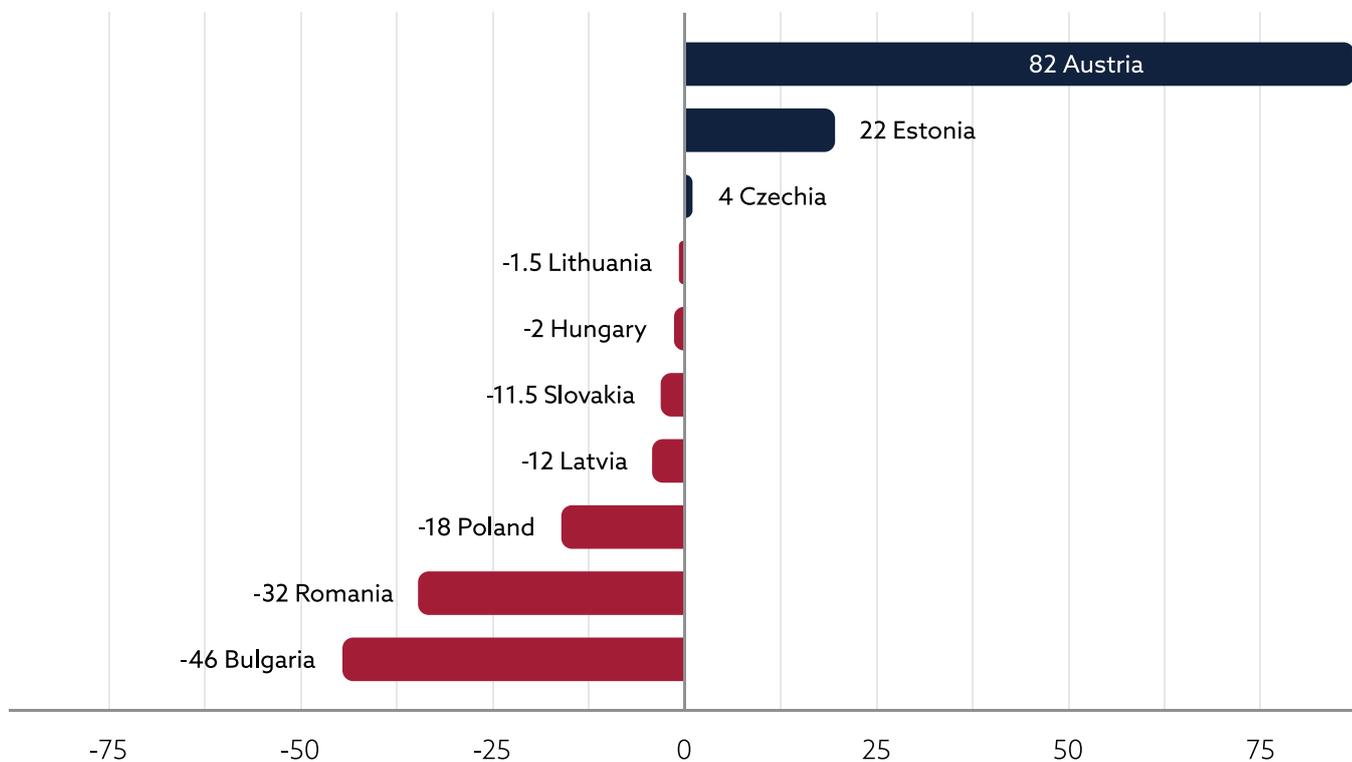


Figure 1: Government Satisfaction Scores

Public trust is also linked to another concept tackled in this chapter - disinformation. Countries with strong public support for their institutions were not only able to handle the pandemic better, but they were also able to fight the disinformation campaigns around it. Similarly, such nations can protect democratic mechanisms, in general, by securing democratic elections, media freedom, and the rule of law.

62. Globsec, Voices of Central and Eastern Europe. <https://www.globsec.org/publications/voices-of-central-and-eastern-europe/>

STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

A crucial aspect of building societal resilience against various types of threats is strategic communication. The NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence defines this "as a holistic approach to communication, based on values and interests, that encompasses everything an actor does to achieve objectives, in a contested environment."⁶³ In other words, strategic communication includes various means of positively influencing recipients of information, while building narratives on shared values and interests. Importantly, through strategic communications, a government can use different "means and ways to build societal resilience, forge international coalitions and attribute threats effectively."⁶⁴

For strategic communication to be effective, it is necessary to proactively use narratives that increase the resilience of society against hostile actors that conduct disinformation campaigns as part of their broader hybrid influence. It is typical to abuse the most polarizing issues in particular societies with an aim to further divide them, lower their trust toward institutions, undermine democratic values, and influence decision-making processes.⁶⁵ Some of the popular topics were described by Rachel Lim and include loss of national identity, globalization, migration, and others.⁶⁶

However, there is a crucial condition for successful strategic communications that cannot be omitted: public trust in the communicator. Some governments in the CEE region do not possess this trust and at the same time fail in strategic communication, as shown by the following statistics. According to Globsec Trends published in 2020, only 20% of Slovak citizens perceive Russia as a threat. At the same time, a higher percentage perceive at least one of

their strategic allies as a threat. Based on the survey, 36% of Slovaks view the United States as a threat. In addition, the same publication shows that 31% of Slovaks believe in Covid-19 conspiracy theories, including considering the pandemic as a tool to manipulate people.⁶⁷

One year later, the Globsec Trends 2021 publication offers more troubling numbers. The public poll shows 68% of people in Slovakia distrust their government.⁶⁸ According to these statistics, citizens feel the government failed to communicate the values, beliefs, and foreign policy orientation, which should be based on Slovak values and beliefs.

Governments should take into consideration two relevant points in order to tackle the problem of low public trust. First, "words must match actions."⁶⁹ If governments want to retain their credibility, they must fulfill their promises. Second, "credibility and trust are vital resources."⁷⁰ These two points can be applied to communication with partners and hostile actors as well, which underscores the importance of credibility and trust.

There is a set of recommendations that should be adopted to increase societal resilience. First, governments need to invest in long-term solutions, such as educational efforts aiming to improve general media literacy and the ability to evaluate content quality. In addition, it is important for governments to improve the monitoring of the information environment.⁷¹ To effectively set up communication strategies, relevant actors need to understand trends. Only then can a government plan and conduct tailor-made strategic communications.

63. NATO Strategic Communication Centre of Excellence, "About Strategic Communication", NATO StratCom CoE. https://stratcomcoe.org/about_us/about-strategic-communications/1

64. Aday S., Andžāns M., Bērziņa-Čerenkova U., Granelli F., Gravelines J., Hills M., Holmstrom M., Klus A., Martinez-Sanchez I., Mattiisen M., Molder H., Morakabati Y., Pamment J., Sari A., Sazonov V., Simons G., Terra J., "Hybrid Threats. A Strategic Communications Perspective", NATO StratCom CoE (2019), 21.

65. Slovak Information Service, "Short Dictionary of Hybrid Threats", National Security Analytical Centre. <https://www.sis.gov.sk/o-nas/nbac-slovnik-hh.html>

66. Lim, R., "Disinformation as a Global Problem – Regional Perspectives", NATO StratCom CoE (2020), 13.

67. Hajdu D., Milo D., Klingová K., Sawiris M., "Globsec Trends 2020", Globsec (2020), 11. https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/GLOBSEC-Trends-2020_read-version.pdf

68. Hajdu D., Milo D., Klingová K., Sawiris M., "Globsec Trends 2021", Globsec (2021), 56. https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/GLOBSEC-Trends-2021_final.pdf

69. Heap B., Hansen P., Gill M., "Strategic Communications Hybrid Threats Toolkit. Applying the principles of NATO Strategic Communications to understand and counter grey zone threats", NATO StratCom CoE (2021), 17.

70. Ibid., 17.

71. Bradshaw, S., Neudert L.M., Nothaft H., "Government Responses to Malicious Use of Social Media", NATO StratCom CoE (2018), 10-11.

ROLE OF PRIVATE SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Private for-profit and non-profit actors contribute significantly to societal resilience in all countries in the CEE region. The private sector's economic, academic, and cultural connections across borders form a fundamental part of international relations.

The private sector has an important role in the establishment of supply chain security. Supply chains are crucial for economic and social stability and making them more reliable entails mitigating the risk arising from cooperation with other organizations for delivering a product. Both physical and cyber security are part of supply chain stability in today's digitalized world.⁷² The pandemic disrupted coordination, which led to a surge in producer prices accompanied by rising energy and transportation costs, as well as a shortage of skilled labor.

According to the Information Handling Services (IHS) market research, an average of 11 CEE countries had lower exposure to material and equipment shortages in the industrial sector than the average among EU member states. The 11 CEE countries are facing a more severe labor shortage than the EU average.⁷³ Based on this, governments should develop more detailed strategies in cooperation with the private sector to be more resilient against supply chain disruptions in the future.

The cooperation between the private and the public sector can also be enhanced during natural disasters. The

World Economic Forum estimates that storms, floods, and droughts are the three most significant areas that cause businesses to incur losses.⁷⁴ When such events occur, private and public cooperation can lead to greater results than both sectors individually. Businesses have an incentive to participate to prevent losses.

Finally, resilience in society can be strengthened by NGOs' work exposing disinformation campaigns and educating society about potential threats. Trust in governments can be increased if civic organizations control the government in the areas of corruption, rule of law, human rights, and minority rights.⁷⁵

Summarizing the recommendations for governments in the CEE region, three main categories can be identified: strengthening of supply chains, natural disaster prevention, and NGO support.

Governments including private companies in the supply chain stabilization efforts is key in today's globalized and digitalized world. Cooperation during natural disaster events between governments and private companies can protect citizens and assets. As this paper highlighted, governments that provide an environment in which NGOs can work freely increase public trust because it demonstrates government transparency.

72. Lewis G., Wright G., "Definition: Supply Chain Security", 2022 TechTarget, <https://www.techtarget.com/searcherp/definition/supply-chain-security>

73. Fisher S., Seckute V. "Supply chain disruptions in Central Europe", 2021 IHS Markit, <https://ihsmarkit.com/research-analysis/supply-chain-disruptions-in-central-europe.html>.

74. Elbayar K., "When sectors work together, crisis resilience becomes greater than the sum of its parts", 2022 World Economic Forum <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/10/private-sector-crisis-resilience/>

75. Burbano Herrera, Clara, and Yves Haeck. 2021. "The Historical and Present-day Role of Non-governmental Organisations Before the Inter-american Human Rights System in Documenting Serious Human Rights Violations and Protecting Human Rights and the Rule of Law Through Ensuring Accountability". *Utrecht Law Review* 17 (2): 8-24. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36633/ulr.672>

ENERGY SECURITY

Krzysztof Kuboń, Martin Sedláček, Tomáš Dvořák, Agata Szmigiel, Andrei Pană, Dorottya Zsiboracs

The concept of 'energy security,' understood as a strategic element of national and international economic policy, has been around for a brief time. In the first years after the end of the Second World War, the basis of European energy was coal and oil, and their easy availability meant that the problem of energy supply to the economy was not treated in strategic terms and largely remained in the realm of the free market. It was not until in 1973, when OPEC countries halted oil production to "force" political concessions on the US in the face of the Israeli-Arab war. This was the first significant use of 'resource weapons' to achieve political and economic goals, the effect of which was felt throughout the world. It brought energy security from the position of 'regular' economic policy to the status of a strategic policy of national security.

There are many definitions of energy security in literature. One of the most frequently quoted is the definition

formulated by the American economic analyst, Daniel Yergin, according to whom: *the objective of energy security is to ensure an adequate and secure level of energy supply at reasonable prices, in a way that does not threaten core values and state objectives.*⁷⁶

Despite the different definitions, one can see a common core - security of supply and acceptability of energy prices. The other elements - respect for the environment, sustainability, or state independence - result from the individual hierarchy of values relevant to the author of the definition.⁷⁷ However, each phrase used, even in the most frugal definition, carries a much wider range of issues than just the question of uninterrupted energy supply at an acceptable price. It is therefore worthwhile, when talking about energy security, to have in mind actions in the following areas:

ACTIONS IN MIND REGARDING ENERGY SECURITY:



Diversification of supply

Diversification of supply sources provide the opportunity to respond appropriately in the event of supply disruptions from any one supplier, and brings with it an element of competition, which in turn can influence energy prices; dependence on a single supplier also makes a country vulnerable to political or economic pressure.



Strategic reserves

It is particularly important to build up a buffer in the form of national intervention reserves and to manage these reserves.



Contracts with raw material suppliers

Long-term contracts for the supply of raw materials clearly have an impact on the certainty of supply, if there is a partnership relation between supplier and customer, not only at the contract negotiation stage, but also in its implementation.

76. D. Yergin, Energy security In the 1990s, Foreign Affairs 1988, No 1.

77. A. Gradziuk i in., Co to jest bezpieczeństwo energetyczne państwa?, „Biuletyn PISM” 2002, nr 103.



Multilateral international agreements

Taking initiatives and participating in agreements involving exporters, importers, and transit countries, with the goal of establishing rules for international energy trade (e.g., the Energy Charter Treaty).



Modern and secure infrastructure

Modern and secure infrastructure reduces energy transmission losses, which is important for energy prices; resilience to the threat of terrorist attacks or unpredictable natural disasters reinforces security of supply.



Transmission networks and interconnections

Transmission networks and interconnections are particularly important for a market such as the European Union; they offer the possibility of a solidarity-based 'neighborhood' response in the event of energy supply problems in a specific market (area).



Renewable energy sources (RES)

Energy from wind, water, sun, or biomass is widely available. An increase in the share of RES in the energy balance increases a country's independence from external conventional energy supplies.



Ownership policy in the energy sector

Privatization of energy sector entities can create conditions for the development of competition, but the source of capital may become a sensitive issue (examples include Belarus or Ukraine, which have lost control of their own gas transit network to Gazprom).



Energy efficiency

Actions aimed at minimizing energy consumption while maintaining a good end-user effect; this applies to areas as diverse as the powering of motor vehicles, consumer electronics or construction technology.



Nuclear energy

Although still controversial, it is a highly efficient and significantly less carbon-intensive form of energy production compared to the use of natural energy sources.

HYBRID THREATS IN THE MODERN AGE

A range of state and non-state actors seek to achieve their political goals through overt and covert activities coordinated across a range of instruments of power, regardless of potential collision with the rules-based international order. It was in this context that the concept of hybrid threat or hybrid warfare appeared. The chapter covers several threats from other chapters, especially the influence of foreign power, threats in cyberspace, energy and industrial security, terrorism and, to some extent, security aspects of migration and extremism.⁷⁸

The spectrum of classic tools that can form part of a hybrid campaign is denoted by the acronym DIMEFIL and includes the following dimensions of power:

D I M E



DIPLOMACY

Politics – exercising influence and exerting pressure through the words and actions of official political representation.



INFORMATION

Media, social networks, and other means of disseminating information, their manipulative use, disinformation campaign and propaganda.



MILITARY FORCES

It can be open use as a threat (demonstration of military presence and alertness) or direct combat use or various forms of covert deployment of individuals, small groups, and infiltration of the attacked state with their use.



ECONOMY

Various forms of coercion of an economic nature (imposition of customs duty, embargo, denial of supplies of energy, ban on the use of transport or transport routes, destabilization of key sectors, enterprises, etc.).

78. Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky, Co jsou to hybridní hrozby: <https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/clanek/co-jsou-hybridni-hrozby.aspx>

Hybrid methods of conflict management are nothing new in our history. However, the extent and manner in which the range of above-mentioned tools is combined and coherently used to achieve a strategic goal can be considered a novelty. The individual elements of a hybrid campaign are not necessarily illegal or a threat in themselves. A hybrid

campaign then represents a combination of several classic tools in order to exploit the enemies' weaknesses, while the attacker strives to create an environment where it is difficult to clearly identify that the attacker is responsible for these activities and at the same time keeps its activities below the threshold of armed aggression.⁷⁹

F I L



FINANCE

Destabilization of the currency, the stock and bond market, the banking sector, influencing key financial institutions.



INTELLIGENCE

Activities of intelligence services, espionage, recruitment of collaborators (especially state or political officials) for anti-state activities.



LAW ENFORCEMENT

The use of various subversive activities attacking the value, legal and other aspects of the social order, e.g., inciting riots in the attacked country using ethnic, religious, or social dividing lines in society, or the use of a wide range of terrorist attacks and other typically criminal methods (e.g., kidnapping, blackmail, and intimidation).⁸⁰

79. Ministerstvo vnitra České republiky, Co jsou to hybridní hrozby: <https://www.mvcr.cz/chh/clanek/co-jsou-hybridni-hrozby.aspx>

80. European Commission, The Landscape of Hybrid Threats: https://www.hybridcoe.fi/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/conceptual_framework-reference-version-shortened-good_cover_-_publication_office.pdf. 2021

THE IMPORTANCE OF STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION IN THE CONCEPT OF RESILIENCE

The past few years have been filled with unexpected challenges that have affected most of our societies. The words 'strategic communication' happened to be the buzzword following us on every step. What are good examples of well-built state projects and why do we need to build a strong strategic communication component within our state systems even in times of relative stability?

If we talk about state resilience capacity building and challenging the hybrid threads, we cannot forget to mention the communication part: "The most important factor in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 is to empower the people with the right information."⁸¹ From the recent Covid-19 crisis, we can learn that states that communicated effectively with their citizens had better ratings and less fatal outcomes.

Crisis management and transparency

The example of Taiwan shows us how important it is to not just focus on one-way communication towards the citizens but at the same time engage civil society and listen to their views and proposed strategies. By implementing the daily press briefings, fact-checking sessions, effective usage of the big data, and hands-on practical advice, the Taiwanese government reached the level of transparency needed to overcome some of the civil unrest and they stabilized their society shaken up by the crisis.⁸²

The other example is Ukraine. This war will be fought not only on the ground but also in cyberspace. The fast

recognition and skilled usage of reverse psychology actions.⁸³ The long-term strategy of using officials' private channels to calm the public or historical parallels and narratives worked well to raise awareness of the situation worldwide.⁸⁴

Long-term strategy and expertise

To set up an independent and functional system of strategic communication on the state level, the most important thing is to build it on the long-term strategy plan. Another point for a successful system is professionalism and expertise. The role of strategic communication is not to substitute plural information and media space, but to bring the important and database info to the common public.

The United Kingdom is among those having the most advanced systems for using communication as a counter-disinformation tool. This system includes experience, capability, resource, and expertise sharing between civilian and military departments. The departments responsible are sufficiently autonomous and, to a certain degree, exempt from the lengthy and complicated approval processes.⁸⁵

To build on and initiate the process, let us learn from the crisis and plan-based strategies mentioned above. The main goals of strategic communication are to inform the public in a data based, transparent, coherent, and knowledgeable way.

81. Journal of Family Medicine and Primary Care, August 2020 - Volume 9 - Issue 8 - p 3793-3796 Doi: 10.4103/jfmpc.jfmpc_719_20

82. Asian Politics & Policy, Taiwan's COVID 19 Management: Developmental State, Digital Governance, and State Society Synergy: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/aspp.12541> . Page: 455-468. 2020.

83. The Ghost of Kyiv story: Ukrainian fighter pilot who was said to have shot down 40 enemy planes. „The ghost of Kyiv is a superhero-legend, whose character was created by Ukrainians!“ Ukraine's Air Force Command. More: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61285833>. 2022.

84. Ukraine World, How Strategic Communications Are Managed In Wartime Ukraine: Pros and Cons: <https://ukraineworld.org/articles/analysis/strategic-communications>. 2022.

85. Government Communication Service, Strategic communication: MCOM function guide, UK Government: <https://gcs.civilservice.gov.uk/publications/strategic-communication-mcom-function-guide/>. 2018.

RANSOMWARE-AS-A-SERVICE AS A GROWING CONCERN

Ransomware-as-a-Service is a category of malware designed to block access to a computer until a ransom is paid to the hacker's account. The goal is to extort money from individuals and companies, with payment usually requested in bitcoins. Amongst all the types of cyberattacks, ransomware is on the rise. Named the top threat for 2021, ransomware was the most frequently used malware in Europe (26 percent), North America (23 percent), Middle East and Africa (18 percent), and Latin America (29 percent), as can be seen in the figure below.⁸⁶

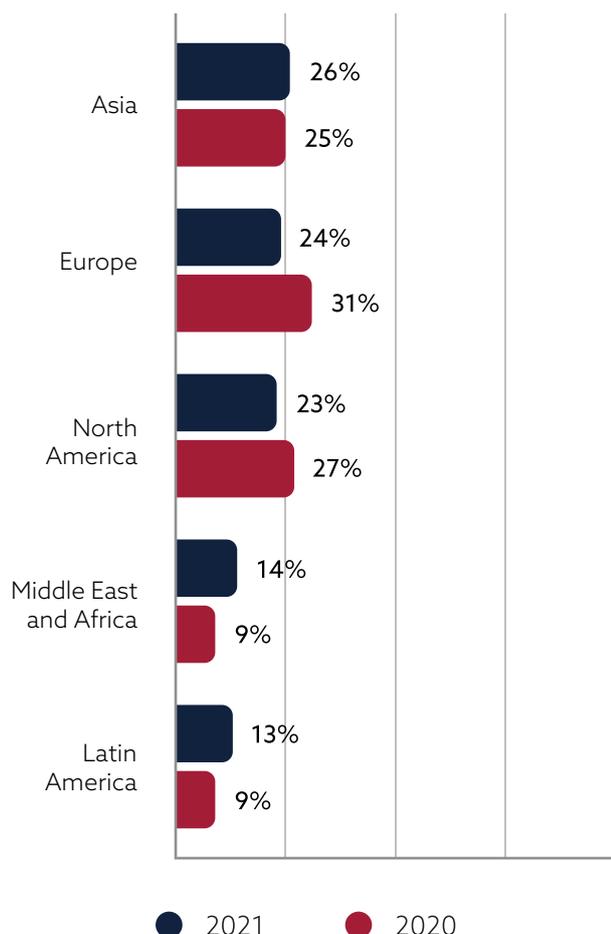


Figure 1: Breakdown of attacks by geography: 2020-2021.⁸⁷

Major ransomware attacks

Ransomware attacks have evolved over time. The first victims were home users, but now, hackers are targeting a variety of industries, including critical infrastructure, the energy sector, medical facilities, financial institutions, telecommunications companies, and others. Additionally, a 2021 independent global survey found that ransomware attacks hit 80 percent of the organizations surveyed and almost all paid the ransom.⁸⁸ Paying the ransom does not always guarantee that access to the data will be regained. However, most companies give in to the blackmail of cybercriminals. The most well-known ransomware attacks include Crypto Locker (2013), WannaCry (2017), Petya/NotPetya – the most devastating cyberattack (2016/2017), The Colonial Pipeline (2021).

Security measures and crisis management

There is limited ability to completely prevent a company from being attacked, however, to reduce the risk and potential losses, the following security measures should be considered:

1. Security awareness training for employees,
2. Regular and correct data backups,
3. Strong passwords (multi-factor authentication) and regular user access reviews,
4. Monitoring and filtering of content sent through devices,
5. Regular software updates and implementation of antivirus and antimalware solutions.

Considering that ransomware attacks in 2021 increased by 92 percent compared to 2020 and the trend is likely to continue in 2022 companies should protect their data with extreme caution, develop their incident response plans accordingly, and adjust business continuity management processes.⁸⁹ Investments in data security are not limited to basic safeguards, as the consequences of the ransomware attacks extend beyond the financial losses associated with business downtime.

86. IBM, X-ForceThreatIntelligence Index 2022, <https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/ADLMYLAZ>. 2022, 36.

87. Ibid.

88. A Majority Of Surveyed Companies Were Hit By Ransomware Attacks In 2021 – And Paid Ransom Demands, E. Segal, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/edwardsegal/2022/02/03/a-majority-of-surveyed-companies-were-hit-by-ransomware-attack-in-2021-and-paid-ransom-demands/?sh=1ef18aaab8c6>. 2022.

89. The Biggest Ransomware Attacks in History, N. Cveticanin, <https://dataprot.net/guides/ransomware-attacks/>. 2022.

FDI SCREENING FOR A COUNTRY IS SIMILAR TO VITAMIN C FOR A HEALTHY BODY

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) creates international economic integration by creating stable and long-lasting links between economies and countries. It is also an important channel for technological transfers between countries. In addition, FDI promotes international trade and can be an important vehicle for economic development. Private investments in infrastructure, energy and knowledge are critical economic drivers that help create jobs and raise wages. Although there are many positive aspects, concerns about national security rise as foreign governments could have access to critical strategic infrastructure and resources. Nevertheless, FDI has significant benefits to economic development and global economic growth.

To minimize the risk on FDI, the United States established the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States in 1975 (known as CFIUS). Initially CFIUS was studying foreign investment, but in the 80s, the perspective of Fairchild Semiconductor being bought by the Japanese company Fujitsu was seen as a threat to national security.⁹⁰ This led Congress to pass the Exon-Florio Amendment in 1988, which empowered CFIUS to reject deals.⁹¹

The EU and FDI screening

At the European Union level, prior to 2019, there was no comprehensive framework for the screening of foreign direct investments on the grounds of security or public order.

The FDI Regulation does not create an EU-level FDI screening mechanism but sets out minimum requirements for EU Member States' FDI screening mechanisms and a mechanism for coordinating FDI reviews.⁹² The 27 Member States are encouraged to implement FDI screening

mechanisms. Eighteen Member States have screening mechanism in place and another seven are in the process of establishing one, as of May 2022.⁹³ Before the FDI Regulations were adopted, only 11 Member States had a mechanism in place to check foreign investments. Bulgaria and Cyprus are the only Member States that have not publicly reported any initiative regarding the FDI screening.

The need for FDI screening has been reinforced after the Alpi Aviation case in September 2021. The Italian aeronautics firm that provided drones to the country's military failed to notify the government of its opaque 2018 sale to a Chinese enterprise linked to China Railway Rolling Stock.

In September 2022, the European Commission published its second annual report on experience with the FDI, providing valuable insights into the regulation's practical impact and possible next steps.⁹⁴

In 2021, Member States reported to the Commission that they reviewed several investment dossiers, of which, only 29 percent underwent formal screening, a percentage increase compared to 2020. Of the remaining dossiers, three percent were aborted by the parties for unknown reasons, hence not requiring any decision by the national authorities and only one percent had been prohibited. The one percent is even less than what we had in the first annual report that covered 2020.⁹⁵ The small number of dossiers that have been rejected is a clear indicator that authorities are intervening only in a small proportion of cases that address deals likely to affect security or public order.

In a period that security challenges are mounting, it is very important to have tools and mechanisms in place so that we can respond promptly to any security or public order threats.

90. Fairchild-Fujitsu Merger Triggers National Security Review: <https://apnews.com/article/e9b121b056db20d50cd0f22583b8ddff>. 1986.

91. Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS): <https://web.archive.org/web/20060325064442/https://www.treas.gov/offices/international-affairs/exon-florio/>. 2006.

92. Framework for the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union. REGULATION (EU) 2019/452 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019R0452&from=EN>. 2019.

93. List of screening mechanisms notified by Member States: https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2019/june/tradoc_157946.pdf. 2022.

94. Second Annual Report on the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union. REPORT FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND THE COUNCIL: [https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM\(2022\)433&lang=en](https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/documents-register/detail?ref=COM(2022)433&lang=en). 2022.

95. First Annual Report on the screening of foreign direct investments into the Union. Reports from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: https://trade.ec.europa.eu/doclib/docs/2021/november/tradoc_159940.pdf

CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROTECTION (CIP) IN THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

In the United States, the Patriot Act of 2001 defined critical infrastructure to include “systems and assets, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the United States that the incapacity or destruction of such systems and assets would have a debilitating impact on security, national economic security, national public health or safety, or any combination of those matters.”⁹⁶

As a result of ever-growing interconnectedness of Transatlantic and transnational networks, there is a higher likelihood of spillover that can leave networks vulnerable to disruptions. To systematically address key issues, the United States created a national program called the Critical Infrastructure Protection in 1998, while the European Union created the European Program for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP) in 2006.⁹⁷

It is important to recognize the interconnectedness of all critical sectors and inter-reliance of systems and networks.⁹⁸ Financial services depend on other critical infrastructures such as telecommunications, energy, information technology, and transportation. Therefore, there is a need for a comprehensive framework ensuring the continuity of critical services because repercussions in one sector have a spillover effect on other highly dependent sectors.

Critical infrastructure protection plans must focus on protection, vulnerability, risk, and mitigation.⁹⁹ The National Infrastructure Protection Program framework

would provide a baseline assessment criterion of ‘consequences, vulnerabilities, and threats to the essential underlying clearing, payment, and settlements systems of the sector.’¹⁰⁰

In terms of policy recommendations, four areas should be prioritized. First, information sharing increases awareness of threats and vulnerabilities, and the exchange of incident data.¹⁰¹ Second, sharing best practices to enhance baseline security levels and establish emergency management communication protocols. Third, incident response and recovery for the coordination of response and recovery from incidents (stakeholders: homeland security, law enforcement, intelligence communities, financial regulatory authorities). Lastly, there is a need for the creation of a policy framework to harmonize policy and regulatory initiatives to advance infrastructure security and resilience priorities.

The financial sector critical transactions are the following: deposit funds and make payments to other parties, provide credit and liquidity to customers, allow customers to invest funds for both long and short periods, and transfer financial risks between customers. The stability of these critical operations is essential to national economic security.¹⁰²

96. USA PATRIOT Act, 2001, <https://www.congress.gov/107/plaws/publ56/PLAW-107publ56.pdf>

97. European Programme for Critical Infrastructure Protection (EPCIP), 2006, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/EN/legal-content/summary/european-programme-for-critical-infrastructure-protection.html>,

98. Department of Homeland Security’s Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency <https://www.cisa.gov>

99. Financial Services Sector-Specific Plan, Homeland Security and Department of Treasury, 2015, <https://www.cisa.gov/publication/nipp-ssp-financial-services-2015>

100. National Infrastructure Protection Program (NIPP), 2006, <https://www.cisa.gov/national-infrastructure-protection-plan>

101. Financial Services Information Sharing and Analysis Center (ISAC), <https://www.fsisac.com>

102. Banking and Finance, Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources Sector-Specific Plan as input to the National Infrastructure Protection Plan, Homeland Security and Department of Treasury, 2007, <https://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/nipp-ssp-banking.pdf>

Some examples of disruptions of financial security services could give us a better idea what exactly an incident is in this area and how to resolve it. After September 11, 2001, the securities markets and several futures exchanges were closed until telecommunications and other services were restored to lower Manhattan.¹⁰³ The fact that these markets and new transactions were affected for a short period of time did not result in significant damage to or loss of confidence in the U.S. financial system. The FED provided adequate response to prevent panic by injecting more than \$100 billion into the banking system, cutting interest rates and lending money to banks to ease pressures on borrowers. This led to a quick recovery as the US Treasury security market reopened on September 13th and the equities market on September 17th. Operational interruption was minimized by off-site record keeping, sharing of working space, electronic records, and communications system outside the attack.

We see the increased activity of cybercriminals in the financial services sector. Twenty-nine percent of reported attacks were due to employees falling for phishing emails and malware. Therefore, cyber education is crucial to establish healthy cyber practices by making sure that all employees receive in-depth security training.

A stable financial system is the underlying foundation for economic stability. Therefore, key public and private sector stakeholders must collaborate in developing stronger resiliency within the broader operational risk setting.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we examined the new security threats such as resources used as weapons and cyberattacks. The past few years have been filled with security challenges and going forward, we emphasize the importance of redefined security measures in the key areas outlined in this paper. Such areas included infrastructure, RES, energy efficiency, multilateral international agreements, strategic reserves etc. As security threats are more apparent than they have been in years, it is important to underscore the importance of the proposed areas in this chapter. Developments such as the war in Ukraine has taught us that wars in the 21st century are not going to be fought on the traditional battlefield, but in hybrid warfare such as cyberspace, for example.

This emphasizes the importance of cyber-capabilities and awareness, as ransomware attacks have been steadily increasing even before the war. In the example of Ukraine, the significance of cyber-capabilities was fortunately recognized early, highlighting the strategic importance of modern technologies in a war. While the successes in Ukraine, the lessons in Taiwan, and existing mechanisms are good signs, they are just the first steps in finding instruments that could help strengthen deterrence and defense capabilities. The examples provided represent the foundation on which we can build in the future and should continue to work together across the Atlantic in doing so.

103. Banking and Financial Infrastructure Continuity: pandemic flu, terrorism, other challenges, 2009, <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc700701/>

FUTURE OF NATO RESILIENCE, DETERRENCE, AND DEFENSE IN THE BLACK SEA REGION

Eveline Marasoiu, Izel Selim, Adam Potocnak, Kamila Konikova, Peter Stepper

INTRODUCTION

Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea and instigation of war in eastern Ukraine in 2014 resulted in the most consequential redrawing of the European security landscape since the end of the Cold War. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) alliance reacted to the new security risks and threats by increasing their defense spending and, after the 2016 Warsaw Summit, by installing multinational, battalion-size battlegroups in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland – thus creating so-called Enhanced Forward Presence (eFP), a tripwire force intended to deter potential Russian aggression against these states. Former US President Trump's staunch calls for the European nations to "pay their fair share" for collective defense from 2017-2021 got several European NATO members to spend even more money and resources on their own collective defense.

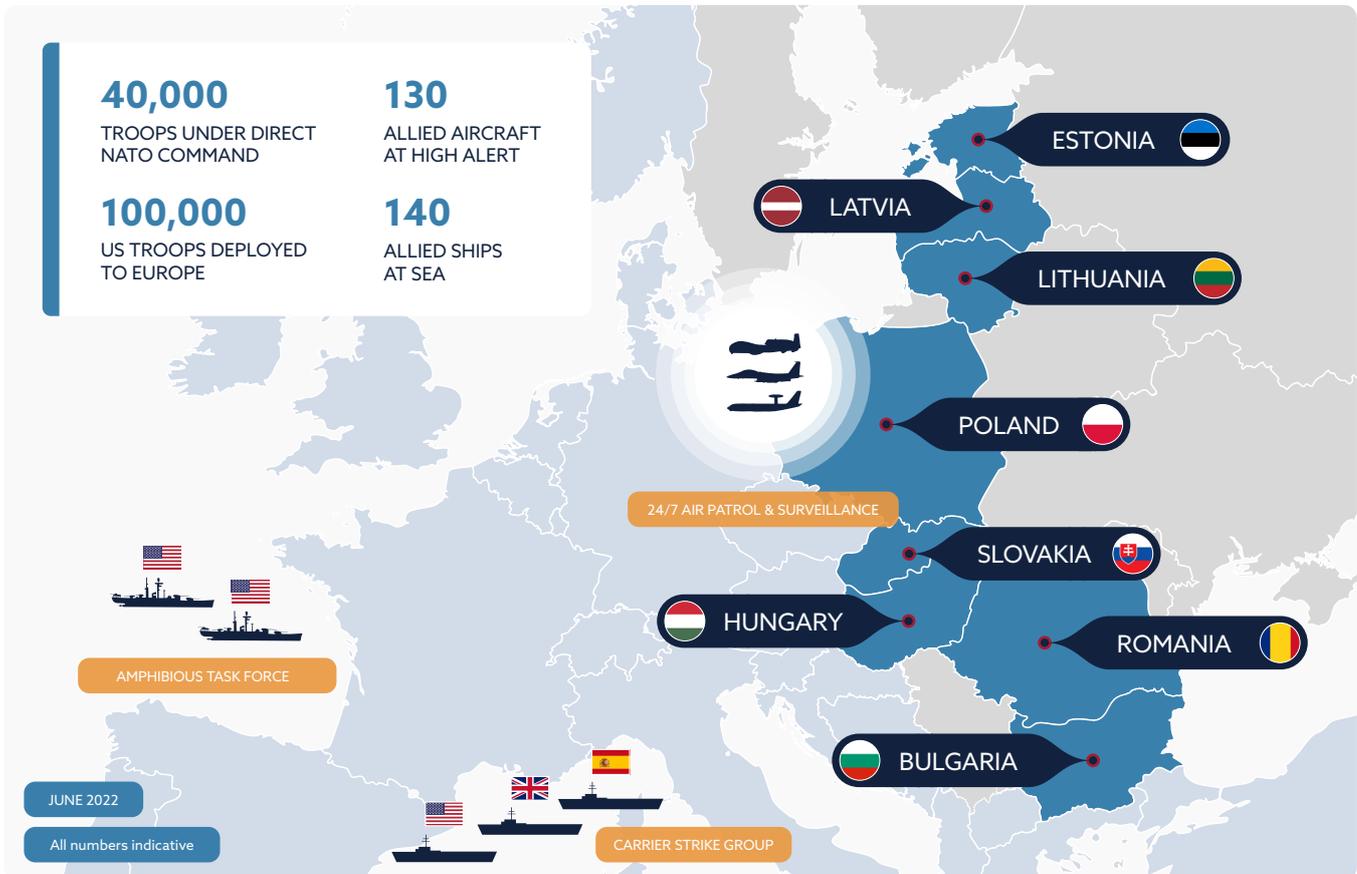
Unfortunately, despite all its effort since 2014, the geopolitical West, with NATO and the European Union (EU) at the helm, failed to provide Ukraine, still a non-NATO state, with plausible security and defense guarantees against the threat of Russian aggression. In February 2022, Russia's full-fledged, brutal, and heinous aggression against Ukraine again raised the specter of a major conventional war in Europe. The war has triggered unprecedented migrant, energy, and food crises, with a looming threat of nuclear catastrophe at the Zaporizhia power plant. The war also triggered yet another round of debates among NATO members on the organization's ability to deter potential aggression against one of its member states. A region of utmost prominence in this regard is Central and Eastern Europe, or the so-called NATO Eastern Flank, ranging from Estonia up north down to Bulgaria in the south.

The Alliance's leaders had to again find a way to make it clear to the Kremlin that attacking any NATO member states would come with a tremendously high price. The latest NATO Strategic Concept, adopted at the June 2022 Madrid Summit, clearly stated that Russia poses the most significant and acute threat to stability and peace in the Euro-Atlantic region. However, the Alliance still has not yet fully managed to effectively deter Russia. It is essential for all NATO political leaders, civil experts, and military commanders to comprehend, assess, and plan to adjust the defense postures of their respective states. It is also necessary to devote all necessary resources and reinstate plausible deterrence by defense and forward defense to enhance the Alliance's ability to face Russia's revanchist and aggressive policies. The full implementation of the 2022 NATO Madrid Summit agreements, including definitive accession of Sweden and Finland, are the key challenges to tackle. This paper offers some "food for thought," focusing on defense and deterrence in the Black Sea region.

NATO AND THE PROMINENCE OF THE BLACK SEA REGION

The concrete measures to enhance NATO's deterrence in Central and Eastern Europe started, to no surprise, the day Russian troops crossed the border to Ukraine. Gradually but resolutely, four Central and South European countries sharing no land border with Russia (or Belarus) – Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Bulgaria – became organic parts of the Eastern Flank. Within weeks, multinational battlegroups of various sizes and capabilities were set up in those countries, enhancing their defense postures and capabilities (see Figure 1).

NATO'S EASTERN FLANK: STRONGER DEFENCE AND DETERRENCE



ESTONIA	BULGARIA	SLOVAKIA
ALLIED TROOPS 2,200 HOST NATION 10,500	ALLIED TROOPS 1,650 HOST NATION 27,400	AIR DEFENCE ALLIED TROOPS 11,600 HOST NATION 122,500
POLAND	HUNGARY	LITHUANIA
AIR DEFENCE ALLIED TROOPS 11,600 HOST NATION 122,500	ALLIED TROOPS 900 HOST NATION 21,400	ALLIED TROOPS 3,700 HOST NATION 17,200
ROMANIA	LATVIA	
AIR DEFENCE ALLIED TROOPS 4,700 HOST NATION 75,000	AIR DEFENCE ALLIED TROOPS 4,000 HOST NATION 7,500	

Source: NATO 2022c¹⁰⁴

104. NATO. 2022c. „NATO’s military presence in the east of Alliance.” North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed November 13, 2022. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_136388.htm.

Later, as NATO leaders were heading to the Madrid Summit, heated debates arose about measures to further beef up deterrence in the Baltic states and Poland, as these countries have a greater perceived exposure to any potential Russian threat. Eventually, even though several countries pledged to increase their military presence in Europe, particularly within the Eastern Flank (with the US taking the leading role), the original demands from the

three Baltic republics remained addressed only partially.¹⁰⁵ However, with Russia's military force and capabilities in its Western Military Circle and Kaliningrad Oblast exclave significantly depleted, NATO should now focus on reversing the Russian threat in the Black Sea (see Figure 2) as serious imbalance in strategic attention devoted to the Northern and Southern part of the Eastern Flank persists.¹⁰⁶



Source: Coffey, Sadler 2021

The entire region has long represented an area of direct geopolitical competition between NATO and Russia, best explained by the strategic shift the region since the end of the Cold War. In 1991, the Black Sea was surrounded by four littoral states, of which three were Warsaw Pact members (the Soviet Union, Romania, and Bulgaria) and only one was a NATO member (Turkey). Today there are three NATO members, two former Soviet republics striving for NATO membership, and Russia - significantly weaker than the late Soviet Union, but still possessing capabilities to establish its anti-access/area denial (A2/AD) zone in the Black Sea.¹⁰⁷

The Kremlin has long acknowledged the sea's strategic importance for several reasons. The region provides Moscow with a vital artery for agricultural, oil, and gas exports, creates ideal conditions for the military defense of Russia's "soft underbelly" (an illegally annexed Crimea), and serves as a "springboard" for Russia's power projection to the Southern Europe, Mediterranean, Middle East, and the Caucasus regions. With this, Moscow has applied all the tools in its toolbox -- disinformation campaigns, energy blackmailing, political pressure, corruption, large-scale military exercises and buildup, freedom of navigation harassment and frozen conflicts -- to assert its presence in the region and prevent any unwanted intrusion from the outside.¹⁰⁸

105. Potočňák, Adam. 2022. „The NATO 2022 Strategic Concept Implications for the Baltics: Correcting the Course but Still Missing the Point.“ ADAPT Institute, September 2022. https://www.adaptinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Adapt_LR_A_Potocnak_9-22_NATO.pdf

106. Axe, David. 2022. "12,000 Troops Were Supposed To Defend Kaliningrad. Then They Went To Ukraine To Die." Forbes, October 27, 2022. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/davidaxe/2022/10/27/12000-russian-troops-once-posed-a-threat-from-inside-nato-then-they-went-to-ukraine-to-die/?sh=25699da93375>.; Gramer, Robbie. 2022. "Russia's Stripped Its Western Borders to Feed the Fight in Ukraine.", Foreign Policy, September 28, 2022. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/09/28/russia-ukraine-war-nato-eastern-flank-military-kaliningrad-baltic-finland/>.

107. Hodges, Ben, Steven Horrell, Ivanna Kuz. 2022. "Russia's Militarization of the Black Sea: Implications for the United States and NATO." Center for European Policy Analysis, September 22, 2022. <https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/russias-militarization-of-the-black-sea-implications-for-the-united-states-and-nato/>.

108. Flanagan, Stephen J., Anika Binnendijk, Irina A. Chindea et al. 2020. "Russia, NATO and Black Sea Security.", RAND Corporation, 2020. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA357-1.html.

While preparing for its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia significantly strengthened its naval presence in the Black Sea.¹⁰⁹ Although Ukrainians scored great successes by sinking the guided missile cruiser Moskva, the Black Sea Fleet flagship, and by retaking Snake Island, Russian surface vessels and submarines in the Black Sea harassed Ukraine with constant cruise missile attacks.¹¹⁰ However, NATO's naval presence in the Black Sea has significantly declined since Russia annexed Crimea, having been limited to almost no military presence in February 2022.¹¹¹ The Black Sea's strategic significance is again highlighted as it becomes one of two critical points where NATO's Eastern Flank and Russia directly encounter each other. The other point is the Baltic Sea or the entire Arctic-Baltic Sea theater once Sweden and Finland become full NATO members.¹¹²

Entangled in a contesting game, the fragile power balance in the Black Sea risks falling apart and endangering stability and peace in neighboring regions of the Caucasus or Western Balkans, should NATO–Russia relations continue deteriorating. Therefore, it is necessary to craft a coherent and comprehensive NATO (or, advisably, joint NATO-EU) strategic approach to the Black Sea region with three eminent goals - increasing NATO's and partners' resilience, deterrence, and defense. Finally, it seems that the Alliance is underpinning its words about the region's strategic importance with measures to enhance its military and

crisis management capacities - as recently underscored by Deputy NATO Secretary General Mircea Geoaă.¹¹³ The NATO Strategic Concept correctly acknowledges the strategic primacy of the Black Sea and pledges to bolster all capabilities to address regional challenges, risks, and threats, which is an important step in establishing regional security.¹¹⁴

A recently introduced bipartisan bill, The Black Sea Security Act of 2022, currently being debated on the US Senate floor, could soon emerge as a welcomed unilateral legal initiative to establish a more active and predictable US engagement in the region. Nevertheless, establishing any common Black Sea strategic approach requires involving Turkey in the process, as the Montreux Convention grants Ankara an exclusive right to regulate the movement of military vessels in the straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles. Contemporaneously, Turkey is the only Black Sea littoral state whose naval forces can operate independently and theoretically compete with the hobbled Russian Black Sea fleet.¹¹⁵ Turkey's relations with Russia have long embodied the concept of "frenemies," as Turkish President Erdogan has used every opportunity offered by the ongoing war to boost Turkey's political influence and his PR.¹¹⁶ On the other hand, Ankara did refuse Russian ships access to the Black Sea and contributed to sealing the Black Sea Grain Deal.

109. Katz, Justin. 2022. "The Russian military build up near Ukraine is happening at the sea too." Breaking Defense, February 3, 2022. <https://breakingdefense.com/2022/02/the-russian-military-build-up-near-ukraine-is-happening-at-sea-too/>.
110. Fiott, Daniel. 2022. "Relative Dominance: Russian Naval Power in the Black Sea.", The War on the Rocks, November 9, 2022. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/11/relative-dominance-russian-naval-power-in-the-black-sea/>.
111. Coffey, Luke, and Brent Sadler. 2021. "U.S. Leadership Need to Improve Maritime Security in the Black Sea and the Azov Sea." The Heritage Foundation, May 3, 2021. <https://www.heritage.org/sites/default/files/2021-05/BG3614.pdf#page=7>; Irish, John, Robin Emmott, and Jonathan Saul. 2022. "NATO leaves Black Sea exposed as Russia invades Ukraine." Reuters, February 25, 2022. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/nato-leaves-black-sea-exposed-russia-invades-ukraine-2022-02-24/>.
112. Claesson, Michael, Zebulun Carlander. 2022. "How Sweden and Finland can bolster NATO.", The War on the Rocks, July 19, 2022. <https://warontherocks.com/2022/07/how-sweden-and-finland-can-bolster-nato/>.
113. NATO. 2022a. "NATO Deputy Secretary General underlines strategic importance of Black Sea region.", North Atlantic Treaty Organization, July 1, 2022. https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_197707.htm?selectedLocale=en.
114. NATO. 2022b. "NATO 2022 Strategic Concept." North Atlantic Treaty Organization, accessed November 10, 2022. https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fi2014/assets/pdf/2022/6/pdf/290622-strategic-concept.pdf.
115. Miller, Christopher, Paul McLeary. 2022. "Ukraine has hobbled Russia's Black Sea Fleet. Could it urn the tide of war?," Politico, August 29, 2022. <https://www.politico.com/news/2022/08/29/russias-black-sea-fleet-stuck-struck-and-sinking-00054114>.
116. Malsin, Jared. 2022. "Ukraine War Gives Turkey's Erdogan Opportunity to Extend His Influence.", The Wall Street Journal, November 5, 2022. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukraine-war-gives-turkeys-erdogan-opportunity-to-extend-his-influence-11667640601>.

As any future twists in Moscow-Ankara relations remain highly unpredictable, keeping and carefully assessing Turkey's vital and strategic interests must become a cornerstone of any NATO undertaking within the Black Sea. The purpose of the new strategic approach should strive to transform the sea into a "NATO-friendly lake" (similar to the Baltic Sea, especially once Sweden and Finland enter the Alliance), with ensured freedom of navigation and limited ability for Russia to establish regional A2/AD zone. However, several fundamental requirements must be met to strengthen and uphold regional resilience, deterrence, and defense. Experts agree that those measures should comprise permanent and rotational multinational battlegroups; advanced, multi-domain force multipliers (mainly intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities); enhanced logistics, with prepositioned stocks of munitions; and active steps securing regional energy infrastructure and naval shipments. Deepened institutional cooperation with Ukraine and Georgia and possibly with the Republic of Moldova, should also be considered.¹¹⁷

CONCLUSION

This white paper has provided data-based "food for thought" on why NATO political leaders, civil experts, and military commanders should focus their attention and assets on significantly strengthening the Alliance's resilience, deterrence, and defense capacities in the Black Sea. Against the backdrop of Russian aggression in Ukraine, security dynamics in the region are expected to be the most militarized than at the end of the Cold War. It is a rather unfortunate perspective, however, an aggressive and revisionist regime governing Russia can be contained, deterred, and even defeated. The paper's authors thus welcome and praise the latest strategic initiatives by NATO and its respective members to develop a comprehensive strategy to challenge any Russia threat in the Black Sea region.

All the measures mentioned above should primarily serve one aim – to ensure NATO's plausible deterrence posture in the region so that Russia cannot change the current power balance by military force. The evidence of Russia's preparation before invading Ukraine demonstrates the value of such a credible and robust deterrence. Even though they started in the autumn of 2021 and gained decisive traction at the turn of 2021/2022, the final order to launch an all-out invasion came last-minute from President Putin, according to intelligence reports, which makes it plausible that the decision was made without Russian senior officials and military staff.¹¹⁸ If true, the analyses indicating that the war was avoidable and could have been prevented have a point.¹¹⁹ It would be a reprehensible mistake to miss an opportunity to build such a deterrence within the Black Sea regions, especially as fierce Ukrainian resistance is buying valuable time for NATO allies, while the latest developments in the Baltics provide the Alliance with an example worth following.

The paper also provides a simplified outlook of specific measures that the entire NATO alliance can take -- ideally in close cooperation with the EU and partners like Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova -- to prevent any spillover of risks and threats outside the Black Sea region. Recent strategic trends in the Baltics and High North, like strengthening NATO eFP forces and Sweden's and Finland's ongoing accession, should serve as a valuable road map for fortressing the southern part of NATO's Eastern Flank.

117. Horrell, Steven, Ivanna Kuz. 2022. "NATO – Black in the Black (Sea)?" Center for European Policy Analysis, June 28, 2022. <https://cepa.org/article/nato-back-in-the-black-sea/>.

118. Risen, James. 2022. "U.S. Intelligence Says Putin Made Last-Minute Decision to Invade Ukraine.," The Intercept, March 11, 2022. <https://theintercept.com/2022/03/11/russia-putin-ukraine-invasion-us-intelligence/>.

119. Brands, Hal. 2022. "Putin's Ukraine Invasion Shows Biden's Failure at Deterrence." American Enterprise Institute, April 5, 2022. <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/putins-ukraine-invasion-showed-bidens-failure-at-deterrence/>; Minzarari, Dumitru. 2022. "Failing to Deter Russia's War against Ukraine: The Role of Misperceptions." Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, April 30, 2022. https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2022C33_WarUkraine_Misperceptions.pdf.



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