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Shaping the security policy of the European Union. Historical view

Kształtowanie polityki bezpieczeństwa Unii Europejskiej. Przegląd historyczny

Słowa kluczowe: kształtowanie polityki bezpieczeństwa, Unia Europejska
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Streszczenie

Wśród aksjologicznych podstaw integracji europejskiej bezpieczeństwo było niewątpliwie najważniejszym z nich. Włączenie powojennych Niemiec w krwiobieg zachodnioeuropejskich powiązań gospodarczych i społecznych z jednej strony, a z drugiej obawy przed rosnącym w siłę Związkiem Sowieckim i wrogim zachodnim wartościom, były przesłankami realizacji projektów zacieśnienia współpracy między państwami położonymi na zachód od Łaby. Zrozumiałe jest, że najszybciej procesy integracyjne postępowały w sferze wymiany gospodarczej i regulowania jej zasad, a wolniej w obszarach związanych z samą tkanką tworzącą suwerenność każdego państwa, czyli bezpieczeństwem i obronnością.

Celem artykułu jest przedstawienie kształtowania się wspólnej polityki europejskiej w tej ostatniej kwestii. Na jej potrzeby przyjęto trzy różne wymiary procesów integracyjnych, które wzajemnie się uzupełniały i doprowadziły do obecnego ładu instytucjonalnego Wspólnej Polityki Bezpieczeństwa i Obrony.

Pierwsza z nich, którą można nazwać swoistym laboratorium formalnych struktur współpracy państw Europy Zachodniej w dziedzinie bezpieczeństwa i wojskowości, obejmowała powstanie i ewolucję Unii Zachodnioeuropejskiej. Druga perspektywa to rozwój idei integracji politycznej i obronnej poprzez formułowanie różnych inicjatyw, raportów i analiz przez aktorów życia politycznego państw członkowskich, co często nieformalnie stanowiło silny impuls do przyspieszenia procesów integracyjnych. Ostatnim obszarem analizy są postanowienia traktatu, który uporządkował i zreformował mechanizmy funkcjonowania wspólnotowych elementów europejskiej przestrzeni bezpieczeństwa i obrony.

Abstract

Among the axiological foundations of European integration, security was undoubtedly the most important of them. The inclusion of post-war Germany in the bloodstream of Western European economic and social ties, on the one hand, and, on the other, fears of the Soviet Union growing in strength and hostile to Western values, were the reasons behind the projects to strengthen cooperation between the countries west of the Elbe. Understandably, integration processes progressed fastest in the sphere of economic exchange and regulation of its rules, and slower in areas related to the very tissue that creates the sovereignty of each state, i.e. security and defense. The aim of the article is to present the shaping of a common European policy on this last issue. For its purposes, three different dimensions of the integration processes were adopted, which complemented each other and led to the present institutional order of the Common Security and Defense Policy.

The first of them, which can be called a kind of laboratory of formal structures of cooperation of Western European states in the field of security and military, covered the creation and evolution of the Western European Union. The second perspective is the development of the idea of political and defense integration through the formulation of various initiatives, reports and analyzes by actors of the political life of the Member States, which often informally constituted a strong impulse to accelerate the integration processes. The last area of analysis is the provisions of the treaty, which organized and reformed the functioning mechanisms of the community elements of the European security and defense space.

1. The emergence and evolution of the Western European Union

The first integration concepts and activities in the field of security began shortly after the end of the war. This moment had a major impact on the motivations behind initiatives aimed at establishing and strengthening cooperation in this area. They were primarily fears of German expansion and their remilitarization. Such was the nature of the agreement concluded on March 4, 1947 between Great Britain and France, which was called the Alliance Treaty, and its purpose was to defend each other against potential German aggression[1]. A year later, thanks to the initiative of the British Foreign Minister Ernest Bavin, the Benelux countries (Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) signed up to the Treaty.

In the „Treaty on cooperation in the field of economic, social, cultural and collective defense" signed on March 17, 1948 for 50 years (known as the Brussels Treaty), mutual assistance in maintaining international peace and security was recognized as its main goal, and one of the tools for its implementation was commitment to provide assistance in the event of aggression against any of the signatories[2]. The provisions of this document also include the establishment of the first regional defense organization – the Western Union[3], which „materialized" six years later after its signing.

The establishment of the Western Union became, on the one hand, an impulse to take steps towards the establishment of the North Atlantic Alliance, and on the other, an inspiration for Western European countries to seek institutional forms of security cooperation independent of the United States[4].

However, the anti-German nature of the Western Union made it an organization not of a pan-European character, but a closed club of countries fearing German aggression and the revival of fascism there. This dominant feature in the foundations of this initiative was a kind of blockage in its transformation into a more universal structure, in which countries opting for the inclusion of Germany in the Western security and defense system could find themselves.

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[1] J. Makowski (ed.), *Collection of documents*, No. 3 (18), Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw 1947, p. 127.

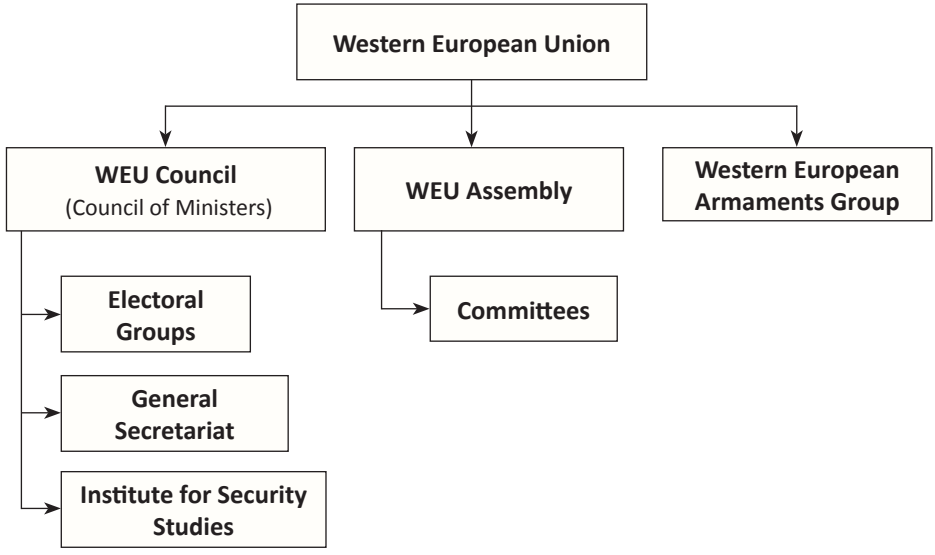
[2] S. Parzymies (a), *European integration in documents*, Polish Institute of International Affairs, Warsaw 2008, p. 66.

[3] J. Zajączkowski, *The European Union in International Relations*, Warsaw 2006, p. 35.

[4] R. Zięba (a), *The European identity of security and defense – concepts – structure – functioning*, Warsaw 2000, p. 22.

This situation changed in 1954, when, on the initiative of Great Britain (with the support of the United States), the Western Union was transformed into the Western European Union (WEU) (under the modification of the Brussels Treaty), to which not only Germany joined (which was crucial for further development of this organization), but also Italy[5]. The new organization has been equipped with a specific institutional infrastructure, which is presented in Fig. 1.

Fig. 1. Institutions of the Western European Union



Source: own study based on R. Karpiński, K. Mikliszański, *The Assembly of the Western European Union and Poland's participation in its work 1999–2005*, „Information Bulletin" 2006, issue 3 (45), Chancellery of the Sejm, 14–16, 21.

For the first three decades since its creation, the Western European Union was not very active and was treated as a kind of link between the countries of Western Europe and the North Atlantic Alliance. The growing political and military significance of the latter naturally weakened its position as a strictly European political and defense organization. This fact was strengthened by the military

[5] M. Madej, *Western European Union (WEU) – success or failure?*, „Świat Idei i Polityka" 2012, Vol. 11, p. 40.

subordination of WEU to the NATO command, under which the Union was to control the volume of arms in the member states through the Arms Control Agency and to comply with the prohibitions on the production of certain types of weapons[6]. At the same time, it should be emphasized that, despite its limited role at that time, the WEU was a platform for cooperation and consultations between the leaders of Western European countries in the field of security and defense, and, thanks to providing it with an institutional order, it was an important training ground for structuring the above and international cooperation of the integrating continent.

The Western European Union was awakened from a peculiar dormancy in 1984 due to the so-called The Rome Declaration, which in turn was a response to the acceleration and intensification of integration processes within the European Communities[7]. The declaration, de facto reactivating the WEU, indicated the necessity to build an autonomous Western European security system and set itself two main goals: defining the identity of European security and gradual harmonization of the defense policy of the member states. And while in practice neither of these goals had been achieved by the WEU, the declaration produced some important results.

Firstly, the issues related to the functioning of the Council were formally regulated and the role and tasks of the General Secretariat were defined. Secondly, plans to unify the standards of military equipment and weapons and to conduct joint military exercises were formulated[8]. Thirdly, the Rome Declaration was a clear indication of the direction of the development of integration activities in the field of security and defense, placing them ultimately in the structures of the European Communities. A strong expression of the latter was the Declaration of the Member States of the Western European Union on the role of the WEU and its relations with the European Union and the Atlantic Alliance adopted on December 10, 1991, in which it was agreed that this organization should become an integral element of the European security space as its defense component and, in

[6] R. Zięba (b), *The European Security and Defense Policy. Genesis and assumptions*, „Przegląd Europejski" 2003, No. 1, p. 14.

[7] What is meant here i.a. the establishment of the European Political Community in 1970, or the Declaration on the European Union of 1983, see D. Milczarek, *European foreign and security policy*, [in:] *Europeistyka in outline*, eds. A.Z. Nowak, D. Milczarek, Warsaw 2006, p. 383; J. Zajączkowski, op.cit., p. 60.

[8] A. Deighton, E. Remacle, *The Western European Union 1948–1998. From the ussels Treaty of the Treaty of Amsterdam*, „Studia Diplomatica" 1998, No. 1–2, p. 15.

the future, be included in the structures of the European Union[9]. At the same time, the Declaration provided for:

– strengthening the operational role of the WEU through i.a. setting up a planning cell;
– creation of military units to respond to WEU calls;
– strengthening cooperation in the field of armaments[10].

The WEU was officially recognized as an „armed arm" of the EU under the Amsterdam Treaty signed on October 2, 1997, which stated that WEU „forms an integral part of the European Union, thus ensuring its access to operational capabilities"[11]. This did not mean, however, absorbing its structures into the EU structures, but sanctioning equipping the 2nd pillar with its own defense forces, which, however, due to the lack of agreement of the leaders of the member states as to their actual role, neither achieved operational capabilities nor were subordinated to their institutions. This was done under the Treaty of Nice signed in 2001, which transferred to the European Union the implementation of its defense policy and handed over to it all the functions of the WEU[12]. However, after the introduction, under the Treaty of Lisbon (2007), of the mechanism of mutual assistance in the event of aggression against any EU Member State, the functioning of the Western European Union became redundant. Hence, the organization was dissolved in 2011.

2. Plans, reports and opinions as a tool for the development of a common security and defence policy

Initiatives formulated by political actors of individual Member States were a significant impulse for the development of the security and defense policy of the European Union. Both those that were successful and those that did not bring the expected results. One of the first to be mentioned is the plan of the French prime minister, René Pleven, who, at the forum of the National Assembly

[9] P. Żurawski vel Grajewski, *Air transport and the satellite system – the missing links of the European intervention forces*, [in:] *Geopolitics the power of the will. Rzeczpospolita struggling with fate*, Ośrodek Myśli Politycznej, Kraków 2010, pp. 135–154.

[10] N. Bobryk-Deryło, *Conditions for the Evolution of the Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union*, Warsaw 2012, p. 56.

[11] M. Zawistowska, *European Security and Defense Policy: forces for intentions?*, „Strategic Yearbook" 2000/2001, p. 388.

[12] J. Starzyk, *Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union*, Warsaw 2003, p. 168.

in 1950, proposed the creation of the European Defense Community (EWO) and its inclusion in the structures of the Federal Republic of Germany. The plan envisaged the creation of a European army and its subordination to the European Minister of Defense, and its institutional structure was to be modeled on the European Coal and Steel Community[13]. Two years later, six members of the ECSC (France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg) signed the agreement establishing the European Defense Community, the provisions of which provided for:

– creation of 500,000 the army grouped in 43 divisions under the management of the so-called Board of Commissioners;
– appointment of a Council of Ministers composed of representatives of the member states;
– the appointment, as an advisory body, of an Assembly whose deputies would be delegated members of national parliaments;
– appointment of the Tribunal to settle legal disputes[14].

The effective establishment of the EWC required ratification by the national parliaments of the signatory states. The first state to do so was the Federal Republic of Germany on March 19, 1953, followed by the Benelux countries. Unfortunately, the country where it was born dealt a blow to the initiative. The French National Assembly on August 29, 1954 did not agree to ratification and thus failed to complete the work on establishing the Community[15].

The plans to create the European Défense Community, although unsuccessful, were an impulse for further initiatives aimed at extending the cooperation of Western European countries from purely economic issues to the ones ranging from the very core of their sovereign policies, i.e. foreign and security policy.

Such an attempt was the Fouchet plan, which was the fruit of the work of a special commission established by the heads of EEC states in July 1961. The commission was tasked with developing a structural framework for a political union of the European nations. The chairman of this group, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, Christian Fouchet, presented the results of its work on November 2, 1961. The plan assumed the creation of a Political Union of European States, i.e. a structure with broad powers and covering various spheres of integra-

[13] R. Zięba (b), op.cit., p. 10.

[14] L.S. Stebecki, *Common EU Foreign and Security Policy*, „International Affairs" 1997, No. 3, p. 24.

[15] S. Parzymies (b), *Security Policy of the European Union*, [in:] *National and International Security at the End of the 20th Century*, eds. D.B. Bpbrow, E. Haliżak, R. Zięba, Warsaw 1997, p. 499.

tion, including foreign and defense policy. In view of numerous reservations (including Belgium and the Netherlands, fearing a weakening of NATO's position), in April 1962 it was decided to abandon further work on the plan[16].

In the face of unsuccessful efforts to communitarise and at the same time structure the security and defense policy, the EEC members at the session in Luxembourg adopted on October 27, 1970, the Davignon report, prepared by a team led by the Secretary of State of the Belgian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Étienne Davignon, on the future of political cooperation of the members of the Community[17]. The report contained proposals for the organizational and legal framework for intergovernmental political cooperation in the field of foreign policy, which was defined by the European Political Cooperation (EPC)[18]. The objectives of this cooperation were formulated as follows:

– to strengthen solidarity by harmonizing views on relations between the Community and third countries;
– development of communication models in international affairs;
– agreeing positions and making joint decisions[19].

The above goals were to be achieved thanks to the following tools:

– regular meetings of foreign ministers;
– the establishment and meetings of the Political Committee composed of the political directors of the ministries of foreign affairs;
– work of working groups (known as the Correspondents Group);
– mutual exchange of information and experiences[20].

European Political Cooperation, not initially incorporated into the legal structures of the European Communities, became a fruitful platform for cooperation in the field of security and defense policy, and in the following years its substantive foundations were gradually incorporated into the legal framework of the European Union's second pillar[21].

A turning point in the communitarisation of issues related to security and defense policy was also the Franco-British summit in St. Maolo organized in

[16] D. Milczarek, op.cit., p. 381.

[17] R. Zięba (c), *The European Union as an actor in international relations*, Warsaw 2003, pp. 26–46.

[18] S. Parzymies (c), *Foreign and security policy within the EEC*, „International Affairs" 1999, No. 1–2, p. 48.

[19] R. Zięba (d), *The Common Foreign and Security Policy of the European Union*, Warsaw 2005, p. 26.

[20] E. Stadtmüller, *European Union. Encyclopedic Dictionary*, Wrocław 2004, p. 211.

[21] J. Barcz, A. Koliński, *Single European Act. Legal and institutional issues*, Warsaw 1991, p. 95; R. Zięba (b), p. 19.

December 1998. It was the result of a change in the position of Great Britain related to the assumption of the Prime Minister's office by T. Blair and its consent to increase the autonomy of the European Union in relation to NATO. Both countries expressed their willingness to play an independent role in the international arena, for which they agreed that it must have military strength[22].

A year later, in Cologne, the members of the European Union used the phrase „Common European Security and Defense Policy" for the first time in their declaration[23].

3. Evolution of the EU security policy in the treaties

The logic of European integration assumes its continuous deepening, which, in order to maintain its effectiveness, should be not only vertical, but also horizontal. Hence, it is not surprising that subsequent areas of the policies of its member states are included in the organization and decision-making mechanisms of the Community. This also applies to the most „resistant" to this logic of security and defense policy.

The Single European Act (SEA), adopted in 1987, as the culmination of 40 years of work on institutional reforms of the European Communities, not only laid the foundations for their transformation into the European Union, but also indicated new areas that should be subject to deeper integration. It provided, in Article 30, a structural framework for European Political Cooperation, regulating its functioning and organizational order[24].

The Treaty of Maastricht, signed on February 7, 1992, when establishing the European Union, included the Common Foreign and Security Policy in its framework. It considered its goals as:

– protecting the EU's common values, fundamental interests and independence;
– strengthening the security of its Member States;
– consolidating and developing democracy and the rule of law, and respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights;

[22] J. Gryz, *The process of institutionalization of transatlantic relations*, Warsaw 2004, p. 182.

[23] R. Zięba (e), *The European Identity of Security and Defense on the Threshold of the 21st Century*, [in:] *Security Report 2000*, Kraków 2001, p. 64.

[24] J. Barcz, A. Koliński, op.cit., p. 95.

– strengthening international security[25].

The Treaty also included a provision on defense policy, which was, however, included in the Community mechanisms in a declarative form, using the following provision: ***„common foreign and security policy covers all issues related to the security of the European Union, including the possible definition of a common defense policy, sometimes it can lead to a collective defense"***[26].

The further step in including security policy in the legal framework of the European Union was the adoption of the Amsterdam Treaty, which defined the instruments and means for the implementation of the CFSP as follows:

– defining rules and general guidelines for it;
– agreeing on common strategies;
– adopting joint activities;
– adopting common positions;
– strengthening close cooperation between the Member States in implementing this policy area[27].

For each of the aforementioned instruments, specific procedures and decision-making mechanisms were developed, which had a decisive impact on strengthening the position of the security policy as equivalent to other policies of the European Union.

Another strengthening of the importance of the security field in the architecture of the European order took place in the Lisbon Treaty, signed in 2007. First, this policy was renamed and became the Common Security and Defense Policy. Secondly, the competences of the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs have been strengthened, including by creating a new subordinate division called The European External Action Service. In addition, the Treaty introduced a new instrument for developing this field in the form of „permanent structured cooperation", which can be carried out by Member States meeting „higher military capability criteria and which have entered into more extensive commitments in this field, with regard to the most demanding missions", and introduced a solidarity clause on combating terrorism and energy policy[28].

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[25] K. Miszczak, *The Common Foreign and Security Policy and the development of the European Security and Defense Policy*, „Poland in Europe" 2003, No. 2 (44), p. 12.

[26] A. Przyborowska-Klimczak, E. Skrzydło-Tafelska (eds.), *European Documents*, vol. 2, Lublin 1996, p. 295.

[27] J. Zajączkowski, op.cit., p. 86.

[28] J. Czaja, *The EU Common Security and Defense Policy. Changing the sign or a new version?*, „Security. Teoria i Praktyka" 2012, No. 1 (VI), pp. 38–40.

Summary

The construction of the Common Security and Defense Policy of the European Union is not a finished process. Still most of the issues related to it lie within the domain of sovereign decisions of the Member States or are covered by the least communitarian decision-making mechanisms, such as unanimity. This is due to the very essence of these policies, which constitute a constitutive attribute of the sovereignty of each state on the international arena. Hence, putting them in the domain of decisions of supranational institutions, even voluntary and limited by control mechanisms, constitutes an effective and still insurmountable barrier for the Member States of the European Union.

At the same time, the currently observed global political and military crises, volatility and unpredictability of the environment as well as digital and technological challenges will, in the author's opinion, generate impulses deepening European integration in the field of defense and security.

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