

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Securitisation of State Security under the Second Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union

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Abstract

The process of constructing security in the conditions of contemporary international realities involves, among others, state entities, whose representatives (political elites) in their statements and documents have the opportunity to build the perception of threats and propose adequate forms of counteracting them. For the Member States of the European Union, one of the platforms for the realisation of this objective is the rotating presidency of the Council, held every six months. It is then that not only is a collective vision of security articulated, but also a space for the discursive articulation of a security threat picture specific to the state holding the presidency. The aim of this paper will be to deconstruct and reconstruct the discourse on European security in the statements of Polish politicians in the context of the second Polish Presidency of the Council. An answer to the question will be sought: was the Presidency an opportunity to Europeanise the discourse on European security in a *bottom-up* model *and* were Polish postulates for its strengthening or change included in the pan-European debate on security? The analysis will be based on the method of discourse analysis within the constructivist paradigm of securitisation and will concern the case of Poland in the period December 2023–June 2025.

Keywords

CFSP, CSDP, EU CFSP, securitisation, Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union, security discourse

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Introduction

According to the logic of the institutional rhythm in the European Union (EU), every six months another EU Member State takes over the rotating Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The task of the country holding this role is, *inter alia*, to ensure the continuity of the European Union's activities, sound lawmaking within the European Union, ensuring cooperation between the Member States, as well as coordination with the other EU institutions. The six-month rotating presidency takes place within pre-established groups of three Member States for a period of 18 months (the trio), which jointly develop the programme and support each other, with the form and scope of cooperation largely dependent on the states themselves.¹ Poland was the first country of the trio (followed by the Kingdom of Denmark and the Republic of Cyprus) to start the presidency on 1 January 2025 and it lasts until 30 June 2025.

On the one hand, the Presidency is a kind of insertion into the institutional logic of European integration, but on the other hand, it is always and for each state an opportunity to accentuate its own issues on the European agenda. Given the range of serious challenges facing the European Union, the cornerstone of the Polish Presidency's activities in 2025 was security in seven dimensions: external, energy, economic, food, health, information and internal. Therefore, the slogan accompanying the Polish Presidency of the EU Council was: "Security, Europe!"²

The second Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union took place in complex international circumstances for both Poland and the European Union. These included issues relating to the ongoing Russo-Ukrainian war beyond the eastern borders, the change of power in the USA, the growing role of the so-called emerging powers (such as the People's Republic of China), and internal problems in European states - the hitherto leaders of European integration (parliamentary elections in the Federal Republic of Germany, or coalition unrest in the French Republic).

The aim of this article will be to deconstruct and reconstruct the discourse on European security in the statements of Polish politicians in the context of the second Polish Presidency of the Council. To that end, an analysis will be undertaken of the statements and actions of representatives of the Polish political scene with regard to state security under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) articulated in the context of the priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council. The point of reference will be statements made by representatives of the government centre in 2024 and the first

¹ Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, art. 16(9), *Official Journal of the European Union*, C 202/13.

² Council of the European Union, "Priorities of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union," accessed July 29, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/program/priorytety-prezydencji/>.

half of 2025 in the context of both Polish foreign policy priorities and those uttered on behalf of the European Union during the Presidency.³

It is assumed that the Polish political discourse (here treated narrowly as statements by the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs) on the security of the state reflects both the conditions resulting from the presence of the Republic of Poland in the structures of the European Union (i.e. specifically in the CFSP and CSDP) permeating the agenda and influencing the multifaceted portrayal of security in the agenda of the Polish Presidency, including the position concerning the building of the European armed forces. Such a specificity of the discourse on state security would fit into the logic of the process of Europeanisation according to the *top-down* model, as well as signifying socialisation into systemic norms developed at the level of the European Union. At the same time, international events led to the inclusion in the programme of the Polish Presidency of broad issues relating to security, not only in military, but also economic, humanitarian, digital or climate-related terms. On the other hand, a question also arises as to whether the process of Europeanisation in the other *bottom-up* direction can be observed, i.e. whether the Polish Presidency articulates and brings into the European discourse its own issues related to the vision of European security in conditions of the ongoing war in Ukraine?

This paper applies the content analysis method by examining statements and documents in the area of the security of the Polish state in the international and European context expressed during the period of preparations for and exercise of the Presidency of the Council (i.e. from December 2023 to the end of the first half of 2025). The subject of the study will be the statements made by representatives of the government centre: i.e. the Prime Minister and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Digitalisation, and other sectoral ministers, as well as efforts to implement the strategic objectives of the CFSP and CSDP under the Presidency.

The article takes a multidimensional approach to the issue of European security, taking into account both the civil-military dimension (CSDP) and the political sphere within the CFSP. A two-level sectoral approach was also applied, analysing Poland's security both at the level of the European Union system and at the national level. The content of the analysis has been organised into three main problem areas. In the first one, a diagnosis was made of the European security environment after 2022 (the starting point is the invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation, which is treated as a significant variable in terms of European and national security strategies), and EU strategic actions and political instruments were presented as a response to the above challenges and falling into the category of strategic autonomy. Next, national strategic objectives (priorities) in the field of security of the Polish state expressed after 2023 were defined. The third part of the study presented the

³ Constitution of the Republic of Poland, April 2, 1997, art. 146(1) and (4)(9), *Journal of Laws (Dziennik Ustaw)*, no. 78, item 483.

position of the Polish Presidency, i.e. the speeches and actions undertaken for the implementation of CSDP and CFSP objectives by the Polish centre of government.

The reflection is set in the theoretical current of social constructivism, treating security as a social construct. The leading theoretical approach was made the theory of securitisation according to the Copenhagen School. Particular reference was made to Ole Wæver's concept of securitisation.⁴ The choice of this theoretical perspective was justified by the assumption that in the process of formulating the assumptions of the Polish Presidency of the Council and the discussion of Poland's security in this aspect, political elites treated the category of security rather as a process of discursive inclusion or exclusion of specific issues in programme documents, giving those issues special status and a role in ensuring the security of Poland, but also of the European Union. The selection of issues which were later included in the programme of the Polish Presidency, as well as the actions taken by those in power during that Presidency, not only reflected the socialisation of systemic norms within the framework of the CFSP and CSDP, but also brought added value to the understanding of European security by proposing one's own interpretation of security threats conditioned by geopolitical location, the degree of advancement of relations with the North Atlantic Alliance (NATO), or the national vision of factors which could improve security. The synergy of these factors may be indicative of a peculiar process of Europeanisation of the security discourse and actions and, in particular, of its securitisation in a *top-down* and *bottom-up* model.

The aim of this article is to show how Europeanisation is linked to the notion of securitisation, leading to the inclusion in the European security discourse of new issues that take into account the national security discussion, articulated, inter alia, during the presidency.

In this context, it is worth considering not only the question of whether the European Union influences the process of constructing the security policy discourse in member states, but also to what extent it is member states that co-shape the European security discourse by bringing in local conditions and determinants of this process. What exactly is Europeanisation in the context of increasingly dynamic European security?

Securitisation theory in European security studies

Securitisation theory is one of the most important approaches in international security studies today.⁵ It is used both in the theoretical debate on security and in the

⁴ O. Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," in *On Security*, ed. R.D. Lipschutz (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995); O. Wæver, "Peace and Security – Two Concepts and Their Relationship," in *Analysis and Copenhagen Peace Research*, eds. S. Guzzini and D. Jung (London, 2004).

⁵ B. Buzan, O. Wæver and J. de Wilde, *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (London: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1998).

analysis of international security practice.⁶ In the case of securitisation theory, shaped within the so-called Copenhagen School, one can speak of a new approach to security. The object of analysis is not so much the state, but above all the process of constructing security. The theory focuses on the intersubjective process of including/excluding certain issues in the security sphere. Securitisation theory seeks to focus on the practice of securitisation, answering the questions: who 'securitises', on what issues, on behalf of whom/what, why, with what effect and under what circumstances?⁷

The very notion of securitisation refers to the process by which a state attributes a phenomenon to the security sphere and thus gives it a special status.⁸ It is an intersubjective process, as it is based on a unilaterally defined sense of threat. Security is a social construct, the result of discourse, narrative and state action. The security threat and the objects to be protected are not known or given in advance, but arise as a result of social interactions - they are the result of social constructions.⁹

A representative of securitisation theory, Oli Weaver, has referred to security as 'social'.¹⁰ Previous conceptions, concerning security, have focused on the state, and it is now the idea of security at the level of individuals that has come to the centre of analysis. Given that constructivism views security issues in terms of a social phenomenon, its claims in this regard seem particularly relevant.

With regard to the analysis of European security issues, the theory of securitisation assumes that a necessary condition is that there is a group of states whose security requires close ties with neighbouring states. The institutionalised structure of European security influences the foreign policies of the major European powers.¹¹

Constructivism allows for a broader analysis of security, as it incorporates the issue of norms and ideational factors into its study. It therefore brings new analytical tools. An example is the way it defines the actors of the Common Foreign and Security Policy. He refers to them as 'role-players', in contrast, for example, to realism, which calls these actors 'rational utility maximisers'. Constructivists further point out that the roles of these actors are not shaped by a simple logic of

⁶ S. Baele and D. Jalea, "Twenty Five Years of Securitization Theory: A Corpus Based Review," *Political Studies Review* 21, no. 2 (2023): 376–389, accessed May 25, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1177/14789299211069499>.

⁷ L. Fijałkowski, "Securitisation Theory and the Construction of Security," *Strategic Review* no. 1 (2012): 150, 151, accessed June 20, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.14746/ps.2012.1.10>.

⁸ Wæver, "Securitization and Desecuritization," 23.

⁹ J. Czaputowicz, *Theories of international relations. Critique and systematization* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 2008), 322.

¹⁰ Wæver, "Securitization," 46–86.

¹¹ B. Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations* (London: Wheatsheaf Books, 1983).

profit. Rather, they result from a logic of ‘appropriateness’ that takes into account the expectations of other actors.¹² According to another constructivist, Christopher Meyer, the shape of the European security strategy is the result of social learning processes and the institutional socialisation of states.¹³

Constructivism brings new issues to the debate on European security, through the notion of securitisation. The cited O. Weaver noted that even when constructing European integration, security arguments were invoked. The goal of European integration was supposed to be the unification of Europe, leading to the overcoming of divisions and the cessation of wars.

In view of the negative changes in the international environment that occurred in the area of European security after 2022 (i.e. since the Russian aggression against Ukraine), a new securitisation of European security and the construction of instruments to respond to emerging challenges began within the framework of European integration. The securitisation involved both European Union institutions and member states. The first impetus for the process of constructing European security was the *Versailles Declaration* of 10–11 March 2022. The document reads that: “In the face of increasing instability, strategic competition and security threats, we have decided to take greater responsibility for our security and to take further decisive steps towards building our European sovereignty, reducing our dependencies and developing a new growth and investment model for 2030. We have therefore addressed three key aspects today: a) increasing our defence capabilities; b) reducing our energy dependencies; and c) building a more solid economic base.¹⁴

In the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Ukraine and based on the *Versailles* recommendations, the Council approved *A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence for a European Union that protects its citizens, values and interests and contributes to international peace and security*¹⁵ which is a blueprint for European action to strengthen the EU’s security and defence policy until 2030. The document identifies threats to European security, which include: geopolitical competition, growing global economic rivalry, technological developments, disinformation or the climate crisis. The document presents a multifaceted approach to security encompassing diplomacy, humanitarian aid, development cooperation, climate action, the promotion of human rights, economic support and trade policy.

¹² Buzan, *People, States and Fear: The National Security Problem in International Relations*, 105–127.

¹³ See C. Meyer, “Convergence Towards a European Strategic Culture? A Constructivist Framework for Explaining Changing Norms,” *European Journal of International Relations* 11, no. 4 (2005): 523–549, accessed June 17, 2025, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354066105057899>.

¹⁴ European Council, “Versailles Declaration,” March 10, 2022, accessed June 13, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/54787/20220311-versailles-declaration-en.pdf>.

¹⁵ European Union External Action, “A Strategic Compass for Security and Defence: For a European Union That Protects Its Citizens, Values, and Interests and Contributes to International Peace and Security,” accessed June 17, 2025, https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/strategic-compass-security-and-defence-0_en.

As a result of the hostilities in Ukraine, the way of thinking about European security has changed, as has the language relating to ways of ensuring security within the European Union. The previous narrative of a civilian or normative actor and the policies and external actions implemented within this framework are proving to be insufficient to ensure security in Europe. European states have embarked on a policy of financial support or the supply of weapons to the embattled Ukraine, which can be described as *hard power*. Also in the quoted policy documents referring to European security, issues related to the need to increase defence capabilities, which would allow Europe to develop strategic autonomy and security in the face of emerging international challenges, appear.

European security in public discourse is closely linked to the idea of sovereignty and the ability to deal with threats. This requires an increase in defence spending, but also the inclusion of issues relating to energy and raw material independence from the Russian Federation. Security is also related to digital defence capabilities - i.e. hybrid warfare, cyber security or the category of civilian security.

Determinants and priorities of the Polish Presidency of the EU in the context of the implementation of CFSP and CSDP objectives

From 2024 onwards, Polish foreign policy saw a significant turnaround in the implementation of European policy and, within this framework, primarily in the forum of and towards the European Union. These changes were symbolically signalled in Prime Minister Donald Tusk's exposé of December 2023.

Indicating the most important determinants and directions of his government's assumed activities, Donald Tusk already then pointed to the war on Poland's borders as the basic determinant defining the new government's activity in the field of international relations. Acknowledging that the war in Ukraine is the basic determinant of the new government's activity, he indicated the key directions of building a strong position for Poland, which will be respected in the world and in Europe and united in the face of this threat. These directions included above all: remaining a key, strong and sovereign link of NATO, fulfilling the role of a loyal, stable and self-confident ally of the United States, and, unusually, regaining the position of a leader in the European Union building its strength through cooperation and respect and strengthening the community within its framework and on the basis of its values. As he pointed out later in his speech, only a strong, united Europe, acting on its values, and more broadly, only the West as a whole, will be able to effectively help Ukraine fighting aggression.¹⁶ It should be noted that the development of these initial assumptions was also served at about the same time by the first exposé of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Radosław Sikorski, presented in April 2024 after the '15 October Dinner' took over the government.

¹⁶ "Stenogram of the expose of Prime Minister Donald Tusk," December 13, 2023, accessed May 14, 2025, <https://www.gov.pl/web/premier/stenogram-expose-premiera-donalda-tuska>.

In his speech, the Minister very symbolically described the European Union as ‘the leverage of our strength, our future and our home’, and among the four main objectives of Polish foreign policy, he indicated in second place the strengthening of Poland in a strong European Union, emphasising that the Union is currently in the process of transforming itself into a geopolitical entity capable of projecting not only economic, but also political and military power onto its surroundings. Hence, while indicating as his first objective the strengthening of Poland’s security primarily through the maintenance of strong transatlantic ties with the North Atlantic Alliance and the leading role of the United States, at the same time he emphasised the need to strengthen the European pillar of NATO in a spirit of strategic harmony between NATO and the European Union. Already at that time, he was in favour of making full use of the opportunities offered by the development of the Common Security and Defence Policy within the EU, emphasising Poland’s support at that stage for, among other things, work on the European Defence Industrial Strategy (EDIS), the European Defence Investment Programme (EDIP), the European missile defence shield - the European Sky Shield Initiative, and the European Rapid Reaction Force. Importantly, the minister also placed the objectives pursued at EU level in the context of the need to further strengthen the transatlantic community. As he emphasised, this will also be one of the priorities of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council, and the EU and NATO need to coordinate primarily in three strategic areas, i.e. assistance to Ukraine, improving security and sanctions against Russia and Belarus.¹⁷

Declaring the implementation of the indicated directions in the foreign policy of the new coalition government on 15 October, Minister R. Sikorski thus outlined in a framework manner the priorities of the upcoming Polish Presidency of the EU Council.

The Polish Presidency of the EU Council was conditioned by a number of complex determinants related primarily to matters of security in the broadest sense of the term, as well as matters relating to the functioning of the EU itself. From the point of view of the most significant external determinants, the most important included first and foremost the uncertainty related to the consequences of the Russian armed aggression against Ukraine, growing geopolitical tensions and the erosion of the international order based on principles and values and the related crisis of multilateralism, as well as hybrid attacks targeting European democracies. Following the US assumption of power in January 2025, these conditionalities have also been compounded by the uncertainty and risks associated with the political course of the Donald Trump administration not only towards the European Union and its Member States, but also towards the core principles and institutions of

¹⁷ “Information of the Minister of Foreign Affairs on the tasks of Polish foreign policy in 2024,” April 25, 2024, accessed May 1, 2025, <https://www.gov.pl/web/dyplomacja/informacja-ministra-spraw-zagranicznych-o-zadaniach-polskiej-polityki-zagranicznej-w-2024-r>.

the global international order. From the point of view of internal considerations, the most significant determinants, in turn, were the June 2024 elections to the European Parliament and the process of selecting a new European Commission and other institutional changes related to these processes, i.e., inter alia, the need to elect a new High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and a new President of the European Council. At the same time, and very importantly, Donald Tusk's government has already managed to consolidate Poland's position in the EU as one of the five largest members of the organisation with significant weight and political influence and as a leader of states in the Central European region further strengthened by its unusually large role in supporting Ukraine's military effort and bearing the greatest burden of supporting Ukrainian society in overcoming the aftermath of the war. Undoubtedly, however, as far as Polish internal conditions were concerned, a factor complicating the activities of the Presidency was the temporarily overlapping presidential campaign in Poland and presidential elections scheduled in the first round for 18 May and in the second round for 1 June 2025.

Carried out in the conditions indicated above, the Polish Presidency of the EU defined primarily the strengthening of broadly defined European security in all its dimensions, i.e. external, internal, information, economic, energy, food, and health, as the natural priority of its activities at the EU level in the period from 1 January to 30 June 2025. Thus, it adopted, on the one hand, a broad concept of security in line with the basic assumptions of the theory of securitisation and with the previously implemented EU activities in the area of security, and at the same time recognised the need to make these activities more dynamic and developed and to give them specificity in line with the realisation of the Polish *raison d'état* related to the role of a frontline state ensuring, to a predominant extent, the security of the EU's eastern external border and forming the largest hub for international assistance to it, as well as a leader in the current financial effort in the area of common defence within NATO. Hence, as part of the broad concept of security adopted by the Polish Presidency, the necessity of strengthening it within seven main pillars was pointed out, such as: defence capability, protection of people and borders, resistance to foreign interference and disinformation, ensuring security and freedom of economic activity, energy transformation, competitive and resilient agriculture, and health security.¹⁸ Some of the dimensions identified were directly or indirectly related to the implementation of the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) objectives.

The importance of the issues related to the indicated security dimensions was already evidenced by the initial announcements made by Prime Minister Donald Tusk on 1 January 2025, on the occasion of the commencement of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. At the time, he emphasised that it was security that would be

¹⁸ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Priorities of the Polish Presidency," accessed March 2, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/program/priorytety-prezycencji/>.

Poland's priority in the coming six months and that the Polish Presidency would do 'everything to make the security of Europe a fact and not just a postulate', adding at the same time that 'Poland would be a leader of actions resulting in peace'.¹⁹ In the following months, both the Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, and government representatives representing individual ministries repeatedly developed specific elements of the concept indicated. These were most extensively addressed by Prime Minister Donald Tusk during the presentation of the programme and priorities of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council at a plenary session at the European Parliament in Strasbourg on 22 January 2025. As part of a broad concept of security encompassing 7 dimensions, i.e. external security, internal security, information security, security in the economy, energy security, food security and health security, he outlined, inter alia, the most important objectives within the framework of external security largely related to the development of the CFSP and the EU CSDP.²⁰ Based on a broad diagnosis of the security threats most relevant to Europe today and relevant to the situation in other parts of the world, where states recognise the core values of traditional democracy, individual freedom, respect for minority rights, freedom of expression, the rule of law, public life free from corruption, he considered it very important to equip the European Union with strength, i.e. to make it an entity with not only high ethics, moral principles and values, but also with the right tools to defend its borders, territory and security. Accordingly, already at that time, citing the example of Poland allocating nearly 5 per cent of its GDP annually to expenditure not only for Poland's security but also for the security of Europe as a whole, as well as Poland's historical experience of its geo-strategic position, he called on EU Member States and the Union as a whole to increase the scale of spending on security and defence and to develop its defence capabilities. Strengthening of defence capabilities by the EU, in line with the concept of the Polish Presidency presented by Prime Minister Tusk, would at the same time serve to reinforce transatlantic ties and the implementation of the postulate of increasing Europe's responsibility for its own security, and would meet the necessity, exposed for many years by the USA, of increasing expenditures for the purposes of common defence, also within NATO. Closely related to the implementation of the external security priorities indicated above are also important aspects from the borderline of internal and external security, such as the initiative for EU support for the construction and development of a line of fortifications and protection of Poland's eastern border, which is at the same time Poland's eastern external border, in the form of the Eastern Shield initiative, and the

¹⁹ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Message from the Prime Minister," January 1, 2025, accessed March 24, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/bezpieczenstwo-europo-przeslanie/>.

²⁰ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Prime Minister of Poland in the European Parliament: "Jeszcze Europa nie zginęła póki my żyjemy";" January 22, 2025, accessed April 24, 2025, <https://polishpresidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/premier-polski-w-parlamente-europejskim-jeszcze-europa-nie-zginela-pokimy-zyjemy/>.

development of capabilities in the area of broadly understood digital security, including in particular the coordinated fight against disinformation.²¹

The priorities of the Polish Presidency highlighted above, which were the most important from the point of view of further development of the CFSP and CSDP of the EU, were later developed and made more specific by Polish governmental representatives during numerous events and meetings organised throughout the Presidency.

Actions for the implementation of CFSP and CSDP strategic objectives by the Polish Presidency of the EU Council

In line with the institutional order in force in the EU in the area of CFSP and CSDP, the initiatives and actions of the Presidency focused primarily on activity within the Foreign Affairs Council, composed of ministers of foreign affairs or ministers of defence of EU Member States. In view of Russia's aggression against Ukraine and other security threats, the Council's work in this format in the first half of 2025 was to focus, according to the Presidency, primarily on strengthening the security and resilience of the EU and its partners, maximising support for Ukraine at the political, military and economic levels, and maintaining the EU's already implemented policy towards Russia and Ukraine.²²

In terms of strengthening the EU's security and resilience, the Presidency's objectives were primarily focused on strengthening defence preparedness to complement NATO's efforts by increasing military spending, developing a stronger defence industry and closing the gaps in the EU's defence capabilities. Consequently, the Polish Presidency, in line with the assumptions, was to concentrate its activity in this dimension on supporting such actions and striving for the development of an in-depth debate concerning the financing of EU defence, as well as the fulfilment of goals indicated in 2022 within the framework of the Strategic Compass of the EU (i.a. reaching full operational readiness of the Rapid Reaction Capability, completion of the strategic review of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO)).

Strengthening key elements of dual-use defence infrastructure important from the point of view of both strengthening external and internal security, such as the Eastern Shield and the Baltic Defence Line, also became an important issue in this dimension.

From the point of view of the priorities of the Polish Presidency in the area of security and defence, the strengthening of transatlantic cooperation with NATO and the United States, and additionally with other third countries sharing with Poland and other EU Member States the approach to the ways of ensuring broadly defined

²¹ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Prime Minister of Poland in the European Parliament: "Jeszcze Europa nie zginęła póki my żyjemy"."

²² Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Programme of the Presidency," accessed April 29, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/program/program-prezydencji/>.

security, including among others the United Kingdom and South Korea, also became very important.

In the area of CSDP, the Polish Presidency also found it expedient to simultaneously reinforce non-military aspects of security, including its civilian dimension. In this regard, the emphasis was primarily on: strengthening resilience and response in cyberspace, countering hybrid and terrorist threats, combating disinformation and developing EU capabilities in the area of strategic communication.²³

Issues relating to the need to increase spending on common defence and the development of the EU's defence capabilities, as well as relations with the United States in this context and in the wake of Donald Trump's ascension to the US presidency, were raised by, among others, Prime Minister D. Tusk at the informal EU summit in Brussels on 3 February 2025, as well as at the meeting of the College of Commissioners in Gdansk on 7 February.

During the informal summit on defence and EU-US relations, Prime Minister D. Tusk made clear his preference for focusing the discussion on the three main topics exposed under the Polish Presidency of the EU Council. These included, once again, the development of the EU's defence capabilities, the strengthening of funding by, *inter alia*, mobilising private financing, making the best use of EU instruments and the Union's budget, and strengthening and deepening partnerships. At the same time, it was emphasised that efforts to build a more resilient Europe will have a direct impact on increasing the EU's attractiveness as a stronger transatlantic partner in its relations with both the US and NATO. During the press conference resulting from the summit, Prime Minister Tusk also sought once again to treat as a joint task the construction and financing of the Eastern Shield serving as one of the basic infrastructural elements for the protection of Poland's eastern border as the EU's eastern external border. At the same time, he included the protection of territorial waters and seas not only of the Baltic Sea (Baltic Defence Line), but also of the North Sea²⁴ among the undertakings requiring and worthy of joint financing.

Security issues in the broadest sense of the term, encompassing aspects of defence, international affairs, the economy, competitiveness, prosperity, as well as democracy and the rule of law, were also the subject of a two-day meeting of the College of Commissioners at the Solidarity Centre in Gdańsk, during which both the President of the EC Ursula von der Leyen and Prime Minister Donald Tusk acknowledged that the absolute priority of the EU and its Member States should be to step up efforts to strengthen European security and defence. The specific objectives, however, again included the creation of common funding mechanisms to strengthen the protection of Poland's eastern border (Eastern Shield) and the Baltic

²³ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Programme of the Presidency."

²⁴ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Press Conference of Prime Minister Donald Tusk after the Informal Summit," February 3, 2025, accessed April 30, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/konferencja-prasowa-premiera-donald-tuska-po-zakonczeniu-nieformalnego-szczytu/>.

and North Sea. Significantly, it was at that time that an announcement was made by the President of the European Commission that the obligations arising from the protection of Poland's eastern border would be treated not only as Polish, but also as European.²⁵

Among other things, as a result of the efforts of the Polish Presidency, issues of European security and defence, in addition to support for Ukraine, became the main topic of discussion during the extraordinary meeting of the European Council, which was organised at the invitation of the President of the European Council Antonio Costa in Brussels on 6 March 2025, and then one of the main elements of the agenda during the Summit of Heads of State and Government held in Brussels on 20–21 March this year. On the issues of financing and developing EU defence capabilities, including strengthening the competitiveness of the European defence industry, the first of these meetings succeeded in adopting a package of key findings.²⁶ These provided the basis for the European Commission's '*White Paper on European Defence Preparedness 2030*', the subsequent ReArmEurope project, and a package of arrangements for strengthening industrial competitiveness and capabilities, including on defence industry development in the form of the '*Competitiveness and Industry*' package. The arrangements identified were further developed at the 20 March 2025 European Council, where EU leaders called for work to be accelerated on all the scopes identified at the 6 March summit and for work on relevant financing options to continue. The goal has since become to radically increase Europe's defence preparedness over the next five years, i.e. as indicated in *the White Paper* by 2030.²⁷ As Donald Tusk concluded at the time, in terms of armaments, armaments and technology, the European Union must be clearly stronger than Russia by 2030, and the EU has finally accepted the commitment that by 2030. Europe must have a full defence capability.²⁸

²⁵ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Press Conference of Prime Minister Donald Tusk and the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen. Stenogram – Prime Minister Tusk," February 7, 2025, accessed May 30, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/53ohuj2w/machine-transcript-prime-minister-tusk-pl.pdf>; Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Press Conference of Prime Minister Donald Tusk and the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen. Stenogram – President Ursula Von der Leyen," February 7, 2025, accessed May 30, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/ywomslwz/machine-transcript-ec-president-ursula-von-der-leyen-pl.pdf>.

²⁶ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Priorities of the Polish Presidency Subject of the Extraordinary European Council," March 6, 2025, accessed May 30, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/priorytety-polskiej-prezydencji-tematem-nadzwyczajnego-szczytu-rady-europejskiej/>; European Council, "Extraordinary European Council (6 March, 2025) - Conclusions," March 6, 2025, accessed May 31, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/press/press-releases/2025/03/06/special-european-council-6-march-2025/>.

²⁷ European Council, "European Council (20 March, 2025) – Main Results," March 20, 2025, accessed June 13, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/meetings/european-council/2025/03/20/>; European Council, "European Council (20 March, 2025) – Conclusions," March 20, 2025, accessed June 13, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/x3tplb5k/european-council-conclusions-pl.pdf>.

²⁸ European Council, "European Council (20 March, 2025) – Main Results.," European Council, "European Council (20 March, 2025) – Conclusions."

Representatives of Poland also took an active part in giving dynamism and character to the Union's further actions in strengthening its security and defence capabilities and capacities. This was done, inter alia, through debates on the objectives presented as part of the EC *White Paper* on European Defence, as well as the arrangements adopted by the European Council in March during the meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council in the format of defence ministers held in Warsaw on 2 and 3 April. This session was chaired by the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of the EU, Kaja Kallas, and the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Defence of Poland, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz. During the meeting, the main aspects of the new approach to security were developed with regard to the armaments of Europe and the rebuilding of the potential of the defence industries, taking into account the timetable of work in this area and the necessary financial and political solutions based on the provisions of the *White Paper*. In this regard, the focus was on the announcement of up to €800 billion for the development of EU security and defence capabilities, the pooling of funding sources for joint projects and closer cooperation with EU partners, and the need to fill critical capability gaps including drones, air defence, artificial intelligence and cyber security.²⁹ Minister Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz also exposed the relevance and importance of 'Shield East' as an EU project to guarantee its security. He also pointed out the importance of recognising its strengthening and implementation as a priority for the European Union, while emphasising its significance from the point of view of the necessary strengthening of NATO's eastern flank.³⁰ A very important element of the discussion was also the parallel strengthening of the Baltic Defence Line and the strengthening of the Finnish-Russian border, as well as further forms of EU support for Ukraine.

The above-mentioned and other actions undertaken during the Polish Presidency contributed to the achievement of great progress in the area of the development of the foundations for financing and expansion of the EU's defence capabilities. In this respect, Poland managed above all to convince all leaders of EU Member States to support the ReArm Europe project envisaging up to 800 billion for armaments until 2030, and also to convince the European Commission to adopt the principle of greater flexibility of fiscal rules, which will make it possible to exclude defence expenditures from the excessive budget deficit procedure.³¹ Other notable

²⁹ Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, "European Defence Ministers Meet in Warsaw to Discuss Security of the Continent," April 3, 2025, accessed June 17, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/europejscy-ministrowie-obrony-spotkali-sie-w-warszawie-by-rozmawiac-o-bezpieczenstwie-kontynentu/>.

³⁰ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Machine Transcriptions of Deputy Prime Ministers, Minister of National Defence of Poland Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz and Kaja Kallas," accessed June 21, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/4vwhzasq/machine-transcriptions-deputy-prime-minister-władysław-kosiniak-kamysz-and-hr-vp-kaja-kallas.pdf>.

³¹ European Commission, "Commission Unveils the White Paper for European Defence and ReArm Europe Plan/Readiness 2030," accessed June 29, 2025, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/ip_25_793.

achievements of the Polish Presidency include the development of a discussion within the EU Council on the need to increase investment in the development of European defence capabilities and the acceleration of the European Commission's decision to present a draft SAFE regulation (*Security Action for Europe*), which envisaged €150 billion for joint procurement in the field of European security and defence. It should be noted that the Polish-led EU Council adopted the relevant decision establishing SAFE on 27 May 2025. It will finance key investments in Europe's defence technological and industrial base, furthermore increase production capacity, ensure greater availability of defence equipment when needed and further support for Ukraine.³² Thanks to the activities of the Polish Presidency, *the Eastern Shield* was included by the European Commission in the 'White Paper on the Future of European Defence' and recognised as an element of the EU's critical capabilities,³³ and its role and, additionally, the importance of the Baltic Defence Line in protecting common European security was also recognised by the European Parliament. It should be noted that during the Polish Presidency an *Action Plan for the Protection of Critical Infrastructure, Electric Cables, Oil and Gas Pipelines*, among others, was adopted in this dimension.³⁴

In the scope of matters undertaken at the level of the Foreign Affairs Council, the Polish Presidency also found it expedient to simultaneously reinforce non-military aspects of security, including its civilian dimension. In this respect, the focus was primarily on: strengthening resilience and response in cyberspace, to hybrid and terrorist threats, combating disinformation and developing the Union's capacity to increase capabilities in the area of strategic communication. As Polish politicians stressed, the European Union cannot be helpless in the face of lies and disinformation, especially in a situation where lies and disinformation have become a very important tool in the hands of Russia, which attacked Ukraine.³⁵ One of the main goals of the Polish Presidency therefore became to find a method, while respecting freedom of speech, democracy and other fundamental values and principles, to strengthen cyber-security at the EU level and to protect it and its citizens from disinformation. In fact, this dimension became one of the most important in the Presidency's

³² Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, "SAFE: Council Adopts €150 Billion for Joint Procurement in European Security and Defence," May 27, 2025, accessed July 7, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/safe-rada-przyjmuje-150-mlrd-euro-na-wspolne-zamowienia-w-dziedzinie-europejskiego-bezpieczenstwa-i-obrony>; Council of the EU, "Council Regulation Establishing an Instrument for Strengthening European Security (SAFE Instrument) by Strengthening the European Defence Industry," accessed July 7, 2025, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-7926-2025-INIT/pl/pdf>.

³³ European Commission, "White Paper for European Defence – Readiness 2030," accessed July 15, 2025, [https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6d5db69-e0ab-4bec-9dc0-3867b4373019_en?filename=White paper for European defence – Readiness 2030.pdf](https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/e6d5db69-e0ab-4bec-9dc0-3867b4373019_en?filename=White%20paper%20for%20European%20defence%20-%20Readiness%202030.pdf).

³⁴ High Representative/European Commission, "Joint Communication to Strengthen the Security and Resilience of Submarine Cables," February 21, 2025, accessed March 15, 2025, <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/library/joint-communication-strengthen-security-and-resilience-submarine-cables>.

³⁵ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Polish Prime Minister in the European Parliament."

efforts to develop non-military aspects of the security of the Union and its Member States within both the EU Foreign Affairs Council and the EU TTE Telecom Council.

Among the most important activities undertaken during the Polish Presidency in this dimension was the organisation of an informal meeting of European ministers of digitisation who met in the format of the TTE Telecom Council on 5 March 2025 at the Polish Army Museum in Warsaw. Remarkably, this was the first ever Council meeting dedicated exclusively to cyber security issues. At the opening of the meeting, the Polish Minister of Digitalisation, Krzysztof Gawkowski, emphasised first and foremost that since the war in Ukraine began, Poland has been on the front line when it comes to cyberspace.³⁶ EU ministers discussed the need to update the *Cybersecurity Blueprint*, which sets out procedures for coordinated action and response to large-scale cyber security incidents and crises; they discussed civil-military cooperation in the face of new threats in the area of cyber security in view of the increasingly blurred boundaries between military and civilian activities during cyber attacks, and issues concerning the financing of cyber security activities. It was acknowledged that the EU should not only strengthen the funding of such endeavours, but also improve cooperation and coordination mechanisms for responding to threats. The main outcome of the Warsaw Council meeting was the adoption of the *‘Warsaw Appeal’* on challenges and recommendations for the EU and its Member States in the area of cyber security. These primarily included: strengthening crisis management through the adoption of the Cybersecurity Blueprint; strengthening civil-military cooperation in the area of cyber security not only at the level of the EU and its member states, but also in relations between the EU and NATO; adopting a roadmap for new technologies and strengthening the EU’s strategic foresight capabilities in the area of cyber security; developing human resources capabilities in the area of cyber security; and developing cyber diplomacy. Importantly, it was emphasised that contemporary threats and the geopolitical situation require cooperation at the EU level as well as with international partners.³⁷

The activity and activities developed by the Polish Presidency in the indicated dimension also included a number of other events organised during the following months, and among them one of the most important became the organisation of the *Security International Summit* in Bydgoszcz on 3–4 April 2025. This summit, as an event of high prestige in the EU and a 30-year tradition, brought together several hundred participants from the world of science, technology, politics, as well as

³⁶ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, “PL Machine Transcription of Opening Keynote by Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Digital Affairs Krzysztof Gawkowski,” accessed March 27, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/ewlh4f5q/opening-keynote-by-deputy-prime-minister-krzysztof-gawkowski.pdf>.

³⁷ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, “Warsaw Appeal Adopted at Informal TTE Telecom Council on Cyber Security,” March 5, 2025, accessed May 15, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/apel-warszawski-przyjety-na-nieformalnej-radzie-tte-telecom-dot-cyberbezpieczenstwa/>; Polish Presidency of the EU Council, “Informal Meeting of Telecommunications Ministers on March 4, 2025 in Warsaw: Warsaw Appeal on Cyber Security Challenges,” accessed May 15, 2025, https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/media/bvibeyfp/warsaw-call_pl.pdf.

experts and decision-makers, and became an opportunity to discuss issues such as: the development of a common strategy for the response of EU Member States to cyber threats, including, in particular, the development of a revised *Cybersecurity Blueprint* being the basis for action in the event of large-scale attacks (this issue was particularly important due to the fact that the previous revision had already taken place 8 years earlier); the future of digital security in the EU; the development of new Union regulations in the area indicated; the cyber resilience of the health sector and ways to respond to threats related to hybrid warfare and disinformation.³⁸ Poland, as a state particularly vulnerable due to the war in Ukraine, stood out above all for the need to strengthen the EU's ability to respond rapidly to dynamically changing threats and the need to develop a common policy in this dimension.³⁹

Moreover, among numerous initiatives of the Polish Presidency, issues concerning the development of relations with Ukraine played a very important role in actions and activities undertaken at the Foreign Affairs Council in the area of CFSP and CSDP of the EU. From the moment of the commencement of its mandate under the Presidency, Poland effectively maintained the interest of the EU and its Member States in the situation in Ukraine, mobilising them to make additional military, financial and humanitarian efforts in its favour. This was evidenced by numerous speeches of Polish representatives at the EU forum, and translated into a number of initiatives, including Poland's active participation in the activities of the coalition of states supporting Ukraine (*'Coalition of the willing'*), advocating the broadest possible military and financial support, including through maximisation of the use of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR). by maximising the use of the European Instrument for Peace, supporting the activities of the RUMAM Ukraine training mission and its adaptation to the changing conditions, and supporting activities to use the potential of the EUAM civilian mission in Ukraine, as well as those related to supporting the realisation of Ukraine's interests and goals in the framework of potential peace negotiations with the Russian Federation.

Measurable effects of the indicated involvement of the Polish Presidency were visible, among others, in the concentration of interest of European leaders during the informal EU summit in Brussels held on 6 March 2025 on issues concerning defence and Ukraine. Influenced by Poland's intensive efforts with regard to Ukraine, important preliminary decisions were made at that time, among others, to further support its efforts and simultaneously put pressure on Russia by imposing new sanctions, and it was confirmed that by the end of 2025. The Union will allocate EUR 30.6 billion to it, coming partly from the Instrument for Ukraine and partly from a

³⁸ Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, "Secure International Summit Launched – The Most Important Event in the Area of Cyber Security under the Polish Presidency," April 3, 2025, accessed May 27, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/rozpoczal-sie-secure-international-summit-najwazniejsze-wydarzenie-w-obszarze-cyberbezpieczenstwa-w-ramach-polskiej-prezydencji/>.

³⁹ Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, "Secure International Summit Launched – The Most Important Event in the Area of Cyber Security under the Polish Presidency."

G7 loan (EUR 18.1 billion). An important element of the agreements was also the development of principles for peace negotiations for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine, taking into account in particular: the need to include Ukraine in the negotiation process, the necessary presence of Europe in all elements of the negotiations that affect European security, the inclusion in the peace agreement of credible security guarantees for Ukraine, and respect for its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this regard, the will was expressed to maximise both the military and defence capabilities of Ukraine by, inter alia, supplying air defence systems, ammunition and missiles and providing the necessary training and equipment to Ukrainian forces, as well as developing the Ukrainian defence industry and deepening its cooperation with the EU defence industry.⁴⁰ In line with the preliminary findings indicated, the EU Heads of State and Government at the European Council on 20 March 2025 adopted, inter alia, a comprehensive *'Declaration on Ukraine'* and approved the decision to allocate a further third tranche of assistance of €3.5 billion to Ukraine under the Instrument for Ukraine effective from 1 March 2024.⁴¹

Complementing the policy pursued by Poland under the Presidency towards Ukraine was its active involvement in the process of negotiating and accelerating the introduction of sanctions against the Russian Federation. Thanks to Poland's involvement, it was possible to convince EU Member States to extend previously imposed sanctions until 31 July 2025, and a new 16th and 17th package of sanctions against Russia was adopted.⁴² Significantly, negotiations on the next 18th package of sanctions were also inaugurated in accordance with the 'peace through strength' principle adopted at the EU forum in March. This policy was complemented by initiatives to accelerate work on raising tariffs on some of the goods exported from Belarus and Russia. Indeed, as Foreign Minister Radosław Sikorski, among others, emphasised at the Foreign Affairs Council meeting on 14 April 2025. Russia, unlike Ukraine, is not ready for a ceasefire and the start of talks on a lasting peace. With increasing Russian attacks on Ukraine, including on civilians, the conditions for a lasting and just peace can only be achieved by force. The Minister therefore called once again for all EU Member States to join in military support for Ukraine and the progress of the enlargement process of the Union to include, inter alia, Ukraine and Moldova.⁴³ Similar elements were also exhibited by Minister R. Sikorski during

⁴⁰ European Council, "Extraordinary European Council: Ukraine," March 6, 2025, accessed May 30, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/pl/press/press-releases/2025/03/06/european-council-ukraine/>.

⁴¹ European Council, "European Council Meeting (20 March 2025) – Ukraine," accessed May 30, 2025, <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-11-2025-INIT/en/pdf>.

⁴² Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Successes in the Area of External Security: Defence Financing," June 27, 2025, accessed May 26, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/sukcesy-w-obszarze-bezpieczenstwa-zewnetrznego-finansowanie-obronnosci/#>.

⁴³ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski Attended the Foreign Affairs Council Meeting in Luxembourg," April 14, 2025, accessed May 23, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/minister-spraw-zagranicznych-radoslaw-sikorski-uczestniczy-l-w-posiedzeniu-rady-do-spraw-zagranicznych-w-luksemburgu/>.

other meetings, including, *inter alia*, on 8 May at the informal meeting of the Foreign Affairs Council on 8 May 2025.⁴⁴ On numerous occasions, the Polish Minister of National Defence, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, has also similarly emphasised Poland's basic priorities in this dimension.⁴⁵

Poland's involvement in the development of discussions and actions concerning the strengthening and revitalisation of the Eastern Partnership was also a significant complement and extension of the actions undertaken by the Polish Presidency in favour of Ukraine and the stabilisation of the situation within the EU's Eastern neighbourhood area. For although this programme has remained an effective basis for the implementation of EU policy towards the eastern neighbourhood since 2009, due to the war in Ukraine and its consequences in other states of the region, it requires adjustment to the current geopolitical challenges aimed primarily at building the region's resilience to hybrid threats, limiting Russian influence, and further intensifying cooperation both with partners currently included in the perspective of EU membership (Ukraine, Moldova) and with the countries of the Southern Caucasus in terms of strengthening European standards and values there. A particular expression of Poland's commitment to strengthening the Eastern Partnership was the organisation of an Eastern Partnership Business Forum during the Presidency in Warsaw on 15–16 April 2025. Eastern Partnership Business Forum and an accompanying meeting of Plenipotentiaries, Ambassadors and Directors for the Eastern Partnership held on 15 April.

The EaP Business Forum was organised for the first time after 2011. (the first meeting took place during Poland's previous EU Presidency in 2011), the Polish Presidency, as emphasised among others by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Marek Prawda, reaffirmed the EU's commitment to strengthening economic cooperation with the countries covered by the programme and among its partners.⁴⁶ During the Forum, representatives of Poland, partner countries and the European Commission discussed, *inter alia*, the challenges facing their countries in the context of global change, developed a recommendation for further building a business environment in Ukraine conducive to its economic development and investment opportunities, *inter alia*, by continuing to fight corruption, and identified priorities in national efforts to rebuild Ukraine and the role of European business in this process. An important part of the findings were additionally issues concerning the development of alternative,

⁴⁴ Polish Presidency of the Council of the EU, "Russian Aggression against Ukraine and Transatlantic Relations Topics on Second Day of EU Foreign Ministers' Talks in Warsaw," May 8, 2025, accessed May 23, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/drugi-dzien-rozmow-unijnych-ministrow-spraw-zagranicznych-w-warszawie/>.

⁴⁵ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Machine Transcriptions of Deputy Prime Ministers, Minister of National Defence of Poland Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz and Kaja Kallas."

⁴⁶ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Eastern Partnership Business Forum," April 16, 2025, accessed April 23, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/forum-biznesu-partnerstwa-wschodniego/>.

i.e. functioning transport corridors without links to Russia. Among others, the summit established a working group on risk reduction and presented potential opportunities created under Pillar II of the Instrument for Ukraine in the form of grants and loan guarantees aimed at foreign companies interested in investing in Ukraine.⁴⁷ In line with Poland's priorities and approach, the Eastern Partnership would thus become, in the new geopolitical conditions, a flexible format enabling pragmatic cooperation with interested partners in various areas, as well as an instrument complementary and complementary to the Union's enlargement policy by financing Ukraine's and Moldova's approximation to the EU. In addition, an increased focus on issues of resilience and security, including in particular the fight against hybrid threats and the development of energy and digital infrastructure, as well as the development of alternative transport links, including in particular the so-called Central Corridor, i.e. the Trans-Caspian International Transport Route,⁴⁸ became an important element emphasised by Poland.

During the meeting of Plenipotentiaries, Ambassadors and Directors of the Eastern Partnership, in addition to supporting the indicated priorities, the need to actively expand the European space of democratic values, the rule of law and human rights in relations with partners and to increase support for civil society and youth, including independent Belarusian organisations⁴⁹ was also emphasised.

Conclusion

Issues relating to European security, due to the fact that they represent today one of the most serious challenges at the national as well as international level, after the Russian aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, dominate the discourse and agenda in the Member States and the European Union itself. Security and forms of ensuring it in the face of aggression began to be associated with many issues: military, economic, digital, social, food, cultural or sanitary, among others. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that in the framework of the presidency of the Council by the states, also here emerged as important elements of building a sense of security for the citizens of EU Member States.

In the case of Poland, following the parliamentary elections in autumn 2023, the newly elected government began preparations for the second Polish Presidency of the Council. Already at an early stage of preparation, the Prime Minister's speeches included references to European and international security within NATO. The language of the expose was filled with phrases about war, the need for security and the guarantors of its maintenance. The Foreign Minister delivered his speech in

⁴⁷ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Eastern Partnership Business Forum."

⁴⁸ "PISM Weekly: European Union, no. 9/2025," accessed May 28, 2025, <https://www.pism.pl/publikacje/tgodnik-pism-unia-europejska-nr-92025>.

⁴⁹ Polish Presidency of the EU Council, "Meeting of Plenipotentiaries, Ambassadors and Directors for the Eastern Partnership," April 15, 2025, accessed June 19, 2025, <https://polish-presidency.consilium.europa.eu/pl/wiadomosci/spotkanie-pelnomocnikow-ambasadorow-i-dyrektorow-do-spraw-partnerstwa-wschodniego/>.

a similar tone. It began the process of constructing an image of the threat of war and emphasising the importance and significance of the Polish state's institutional commitments to the EU and NATO on security issues.

Statements and actions of Polish politicians in the context of preparations for the Presidency also unequivocally testified that security in its several forms is a priority for the Polish Presidency. Noteworthy, however, are not only the declarative dimensions of the inclusion of issues into the security discourse, but also the actual actions which the Polish government promoted and supported in the European forum, and which may indicate that it was from Poland that incentives were provided for the discourse on European security to include such issues as: increased defence spending, the emergence of a border category or zone bordering the territory of the Russian Federation requiring special attention when it comes to security programmes, the issue of digital security or, finally, the strengthening of the civilian dimension of European security. These elements should be treated as Poland's contribution to the discourse on European security, the articulation and implementation of which was possible thanks to, among other things, the format of the Polish Presidency of the Council. It should be noted that, as indicated in the text of the article, they have already become, to a large extent with Poland's participation during its presidency, the subject of extensive activities within the EU (the *ReArm Europe* programme, the Union's involvement in the development of the European defence industry, the inclusion of the implementation of the Shield East or Baltic Line of Defence project in EU programmes, the acceleration of decisions on the introduction of the 16. and 17. package of sanctions against the Russian Federation).

Therefore, it should be recognised that the securitisation of European security took place in the model of not only *top-down* but also *bottom-up* Europeanisation, testifying to the effective strategy of the Polish government during its Presidency in the area of discursive shaping of the image of European security and the forms of its implementation.

As far as the theoretical aspect is concerned, the paper pointed to the possible potential of the securitisation theory in the aspect of explaining the phenomenon of the Presidency in terms of shaping an all-European discourse about challenges to security and ways of overcoming them, which would take into account national contexts in that respect. It was pointed out that the phenomenon of a kind of *bottom-up* discursive Europeanisation takes place here, i.e. the discourse on European security in the context of the Presidency may be shaped by local factors, and it is inclusive in relation to national experiences and needs for securitisation. However, the conditions for the success of such a discursive strategy and the circumstances of their acceptance at the level of the political system of the European Union require further research.

Ethics and consent

Ethical approval and consent were not required.

Data availability

No data is associated with this article.