

## CZECH SECURITY POLICY CAPABILITIES AND AMBITIONS

Sándor Fekete 

associate professor, University of Miskolc, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Institute of Applied Social Sciences

3515 Miskolc-Egyetemváros, e-mail: [sandor.fekete@uni-miskolc.hu](mailto:sandor.fekete@uni-miskolc.hu)

### Abstract

*This article describes the development of Czech security policy since 1989, providing an analytical description and introducing the major institutions and authorities concerned as well as the various actors involved in security policy. At the beginning of the article a definition of security policy is provided and its various stages and major topics since 1989 are introduced. The chapter also describes the various political measures and their implementation, including selected Czech security strategies. It then examines selected security institutions, their evolution and responses to some crisis situations. Although political parties, interest groups, private security agencies, media and political experts have long been involved in shaping Czech security policy, the focus of this chapter is on security institutions (authorities and security forces). Security policy is presented in chronological, institutional and thematic terms. The development of the Czech security environment is investigated mainly since 2000.*

**Keywords:** *Czech security policy, Europeanisation, Czech Interior Ministry, Czech security strategy, Czech Integrated Rescue System, illegal migration*

### 1. Introduction

Security policy is multidisciplinary in character and is implemented by multiple departments. The theoretical apparatus of the participating (exploitable) scientific disciplines and authorities involved is extraordinarily varied. It includes, for example, the findings of military theory, international relations, political science, crisis management, public, international and criminal law, computer science (in the context of securing computer and communication systems), history and diplomacy (Zeman, 2002). It is a policy that is variously conceived in political science and official documents. This is because there are various concepts of security, or of the reference objects whose interests are to be secured. In Czechia, the state has sought for several years to make the concept of security more precise, with help provided by the scientific and expert security communities (Mareš, 2010).

Security is the key term for defining security policy. Security can be defined as a situation where the threats to the object (usually a nation state, but it could also be an international organization) and its interests are eliminated as far as possible, and the object is efficiently equipped to eliminate existing and potential threats and is willing to cooperate in this elimination. The security of a state is discussed in an objective and a subjective sense. The former means that the values shared by society are not exposed to any direct threat. The subjective sense means that there is no fear that these shared values could become subject to an attack (Mareš, 2002; Eichler, 2006; Smolík, 2014; Mareš, 2010). Securitization is a related term. In this process, a particular phenomenon is defined as something standing ‘beyond’ standard political action. Securitization can thus be considered a more radical version of politicization. From a theoretical viewpoint, any public issue can be placed on a scale ranging from depoliticized (the state

does not have anything to do with it and it does not become a subject of public debate or public decision-making in any other way) to politicized (the issue becomes part of public policy, ultimately requiring government intervention in the shape of an official decision and allocation of resources, or, more rarely, another form of social activity) to securitized (the issue is understood as an existential threat, requiring extraordinary measures, and it justifies action that goes beyond the standard limits of political procedure) (Buzan, Waever and Wilde, 2005).

As a set of strategies, capacities, measures, resources and instruments to defend the interests of its bearer (the state), security policy should reflect how it understands the concept of security (Balabán et al., 2005). Security policy is not just a conception for times of war, but a natural element of statehood at any time. It is a broader concept than military strategy; it is the highest type of strategy, integrating foreign, internal and defence policy. It includes political, diplomatic, technological, economic, environmental, cultural and moral factors and aspects that must be integrated optimally. Security policy is a matter not for soldiers, but statesmen and stateswomen – politicians. Security policy understands the use of the armed forces as the exploitation of potential force in situations of threat, aggression or war. The actual deployment of armed forces is a matter for defence or military policy and military strategy (Porada et al., 2019).

Currently, scholarly interest is turning towards the security of certain social groups linked with the state, and the individual safety of people and their protection from the state or its inaction (e. g., in the case of humanitarian catastrophe) are also emphasized. Generally speaking, there is interest in human security and this concept finds a response in the policies of some states and international organisations, including the European Union (EU). National (state) security remains the most important element of security policy in the contemporary world. In connection with the extent of some of the so-called new security threats (international/global terrorism, organised crime, weapons-of-mass-destruction proliferation, etc.) and the need to eliminate these internationally, the traditional difference between internal and external security policy is being eroded, although it has not disappeared entirely (Balabán et al., 2005). Traditionally, the security policies of states and their scientific study have been focused largely on the domain of diplomatic links between allies in the context of military security, and on the fundamental aspects of ensuring the internal stability of the political regime.

Since the end of the Cold War, attention has been focused on other sectors of security. This is attributed to the Copenhagen School of security studies, whose leaders have already been cited: Barry Buzan, Ole Waever and Jaap de Wilde. In their book *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* (1997, Czech edition 2005) they defined five sectors of security:

- (1) Military;
- (2) Political;
- (3) Societal;
- (4) Economic; and
- (5) Environmental (see Buzan, Waever and Wilde, 2005; Mareš, 2010).

This is one of the reasons why today we view security and security policy from a multi-disciplinary perspective (Waisová et al., 2003; Danics and Strnad, 2016).

Despite this multi-disciplinary approach, a ‘hard core’ of security policy can be identified, and it is usually concentrated in the departments of defence, foreign affairs, interior and possibly some others (finance, justice and so on) and special institutions (intelligence services outside government departments). Recently, and with state approval, privatisation has appeared in various domains linked with security policy that during the modern era were solely the preserve of the state (policing, prisons, the military and suchlike). Like other policies, security policy is implemented at multiple levels, from local and sub-

national to national, international, sub-regional, regional and global. When European regional policy is concerned with external and internal security policy, the phenomenon of Europeanisation appears, although this tends to be established less in the security area than in some other policies (Mareš, 2010).

Security policy can be defined as the set of fundamental state interests and objectives, as well as the main instruments to achieve these, that aim to ensure state sovereignty and integrity, constitutionality and the activities of democratic institutions, the economic and social development of the state, the protection of the health and lives of people, property, cultural assets and the environment, and the fulfilment of international security commitments. A state's security is never absolute; it is always related to the particular situation, the particular threats, whether they are military or non-military in character. It has its objective side – threats that really exist – and the subjective side, following from how a state or its government perceives these threats, what importance it attaches to them and how it responds. In the comprehensive understanding, Czech security policy consists of the following components: (1) foreign policy in the area of security, (2) defence and military policy and (3) internal order and security policy.

The preconditions for the creation and implementation of security policy are established by the country's economic, financial, industrial and trade policies and legislation. In a broader sense, security policy may be said to encompass environmental, social and other policies. The conceptual level may be seen as separate from the implementation level. The conception of Czech security policy relies on scholarly and research findings that are analytical and prognostic in character, and is developed by the relevant bodies of the executive branch. It is continuously adapted to the prevailing needs, and the particular and anticipated security situation of the country and its people. The creation and implementation of security policy and the state's security system, including its armed forces, is subject to constant democratic control (Porada et al., 2019).

Security policy is therefore 'the highest type of strategy that integrates the state's foreign policy, its internal policy and the defence policy of its armed forces' (Danics and Strnad, 2016).

## **2. The security environment**

Security policy is dependent on the particular security environment, which is made up of many factors, including the conditions in the region and state, and the global security situation (e. g., the geopolitical situation and international politics). These factors significantly influence the overall political and security situation of the country, as well as its particular security strategies, legislation, infrastructure and military and defence capabilities.

The security environment is a very complicated and dynamic area that is difficult to predict, with a high measure of unknowability and uncertainty and with poor options for control. It is located beyond the state's borders. In this environment, the interests of the state are implemented, come into conflict or are in harmony with the (national, security, economic and other) interests of other (state and non-state) actors in international relations. There are phenomena and processes that have a significant impact on the level of security of the reference object (usually a state or an international organisation). The security environment is characterised by states, international organisations, non-state actors and other entities, and their mutual relations and activities that are significant in terms of security. It is an area where the security (national) interests of the reference object, most often a state or international organisation, may be influenced. For that reason, a rational security policy is based, among other things, on an analysis and prediction of the security environment. The security environment cannot be exactly defined geographically, as it must be related to the particular reference object; it is limited by its interests and

the potential to project power necessary to promote these interests, and both the interests and the options for their defence and promotion may change over time (Karaffa, Hrinko, Zůna et al., 2022).

The security environment is the external environment influencing the actor, that is, a space in which processes occur that have fundamental impacts on the security of the individual actors and in which, at the same time, the interests of the various actors in the system of international relations clash. This environment is generally considered difficult to know and control, and it always exhibits a measure of uncertainty (Dubský et al., 2019).

Globalisation, seen as an essentially unguided, objective process, is important in relation to the development of the security environment. The impacts of the globalisation process at any given stage can have non-negligible effects on the stability of the security environment (Dubský et al., 2019). In a closely connected, globalised world, the risk increases of highly infectious diseases spreading, in consequence of tourism, a laboratory leak or terrorist action; examples include the Aids epidemic and the Covid-19 pandemic (Balabán et al., 2005). Globalisation means that both positive and negative development trends are transferred at an accelerated rate, in particular in the domains of the economy and security. New threats (e. g., those connected with the uncontrollable movement of capital) are connected with globalisation, and traditional threats are emphasised (not just due to rapid overspill, but also to technological development and the involvement of cyberspace). As such threats intensify, their potential impacts on the various actors become more dramatic, and the actors find it difficult individually to respond to them. The changing role of states, which unfolds under the influence of globalisation processes, is linked with their interdependence and the limitations placed on their actual sovereignty; sovereignty meant not as a legal concept (though there are shifts there too) but in terms of their actual ability to act as a sovereign entity internally and externally. States cease to be able to ensure their security in the system on their own, yet are also unable to respond to this situation by creating an efficient system of managing security globally or regionally (Dubský et al., 2019).

These are some of the reasons why this chapter primarily focuses on internal security, i.e., the Czech security environment, which is nonetheless substantially influenced by relations with other countries and actors of security relations in Central Europe and at the international and global level as connected with Czech membership of organisations such as the EU, NATO, Interpol and Europol (Hrinko, 2021; Porada et al., 2019).

Fundamentally, the characteristics of the Czech security environment follow from the Czech Constitution, which declares the essential values of the state (for instance, that it is a democratic parliamentary republic), as further elaborated in law and implemented by democratic institutions. Overall, the Czech security environment has significantly developed and changed over recent years, due to internal (purchases of equipment for the Czech Armed Forces, some institutional changes in fighting crime and so on) and external factors (e. g., the extended migration crisis, measures against illegal migration and the wars between Russia and Ukraine and Israel and Hamas).

### **3. Czech security policy**

Czech security policy is defined by official documents, which set out the measures aimed to ensure the internal and external security, defence and protection of Czech citizens. This policy is implemented through foreign, defence and economic policies as well as policies of internal security and public awareness, which are interlinked. Domestic security policy aims to formulate and implement principles to protect the democratic foundations of the state, and ensure internal security and public order (Mareš, 2010).

Security policy is an aggregation of the state's fundamental interests and objectives, and includes the main instruments to achieve these. Its aim is to ensure state sovereignty and unity, constitutionality and the operation of democratic institutions, economic and social development of the nation, protection of peoples' health and property, cultural assets, the environment and the fulfilment of international security commitments.

A state's security is never absolute; it is always relative to the particular situation, the particular threats, whether they are military or non-military in character. It has its objective side – actual threats – and subjective side, following from how the government or other state institutions perceive these threats, what importance they attach to them and how they respond. The components of internal and external security permeate each other. Internal security is linked with the international situation (e. g., international terrorism, migration or weapons-of-mass destruction proliferation). Countries having a low standard of internal security are considered sources of instability for their neighbours or even the entire region. This means that internal security clearly has an international aspect, and external security has an internal aspect. Chiefly these are concerned with the questions of sovereignty and the safety of citizens and their state.

Security policy is a political concept and a set of state measures to ensure the state's internal and external security. It encompasses the protection of the state from an attack by an external enemy, protection of citizens including their rights and property, and protection of the system of government and the legal system. Defining the principles of security policy falls within the purview of the legislative branch and its implementation is the responsibility of the government, in particular the ministries of the interior, defence and justice. But, however well written, security policy documents and implementing instruments are not on their own a guarantee of success. The management of the implementation is important, requiring not just good quality strategic concepts, but also leadership, competent human resources, information and know-how – the components of modern management science. Security policy with its principles creates a common framework for sharing information, strengthening cooperation and data and information exchange among the implementing actors, having as its objective early detection and the optimisation of the coordination processes of collaboration and co-action (Porada et al., 2019).

Security policy is implemented through the following subsidiary policies: (1) foreign, (2) defence, (3) economic, (4) internal security and (5) public awareness (Rektořík et al., 2004).

With its foreign policy, Czechia promotes its interests abroad, seeking to reinforce its position in the international community through bilateral and multilateral relations, for example: (a) as a NATO member; (b) as an EU member state; (c) via membership of the Visegrád Group and otherwise to develop cooperation in Central Europe; (d) to foster the efficiency of international law in international relations, and so on (Rektořík et al., 2004).

Defence policy is one of the fundamental instruments for promoting Czech security interests. Its main objectives are to ensure sovereignty, territorial integrity, the principles of democracy and the rule of law, and the protection of people and their property against external threats. To this effect, in coordination with its foreign policy, Czechia formulates the fundamentals for preparing and using the corresponding elements within the Czech security system. Defence policy is based on the comprehensive character of the provisioning of defence, consisting of the inseparableness of its external, internal, military and non-military aspects, and in preventative as well as operational action of the various elements of the security system (Rektořík et al., 2004).

The chief objectives of internal security policy are to formulate and implement measures to protect the democratic foundations of the state, ensuring its internal security and public order in the country. All

elements of the security systems are actively involved in the provisioning of internal security. The public order situation is addressed not only by punishment but also by crime prevention.

Economic policy creates the conditions for ensuring the state's security, eliminates existing and potential security risks in the country's economy and in external economic relations, and fundamentally influences the production of resources to ensure the country's security. The Czech economy is an open, market economy, macro-economically stable and connected into international trade and financial relations, creating the conditions for sustainable economic growth. Economic policy also seeks to minimise Czechia's dependence on supplies from countries that are economically or politically unstable (Rektořík et al., 2004).

Public awareness policy works with the media. It creates and runs public administration websites and systems for exchanging security information. Overall, this policy is linked with the theme of digitising public administration (Rektořík et al., 2004).

The appropriate conditions for the creation and implementation of security policy are established by the country's economic, financial, industrial and trade policies and legislation. In a broader sense, security policy may be said to encompass environmental, social and other policies. Security policy is seen in terms of a conceptual level and an implementation level. The conception of Czech security policy relies on scholarly and research findings that are analytical and prognostic in character, and is developed by the relevant bodies of the executive branch of government. It is continuously adapted to current needs, the particular and anticipated security situation of the country and its people. The creation and implementation of security policy and the state's security system including its armed forces is subject to constant democratic control (Porada et al., 2019; Rektořík et al., 2004).

Czech security policy consists of instruments and has its defined objectives. All of these means are intended to ensure territorial integrity and state sovereignty, the protection of the principles of democracy, social and economic development, the lives and health of the population, the environment, property and so on. There are also mandatory international commitments in the security area. Security policy is defined by strategic documents relevant to this domain, of which the most important is the Czech security strategy (Hrinko, 2021).

#### **4. The evolution of security policy since 1989**

The periodization, or determination of the different stages of development, of security policy is a complex task. Security policy is often defined by particular themes, which may appear at the international, national or regional level, and to which various security agendas respond, seeking solutions to situations as they arise. Very roughly speaking, there have been several developmental phases of Czech/Czechoslovak security policy. These phases are only approximate and the transitions are usually not sharp.

##### **'Revolution and transformation'**

The first, 'revolution and transformation' phase, was linked with the reform of the communist security system under the new democratic conditions and in connection with the break-up of the Czechoslovak federation. It started after 17 November 1989 and contained a 'revolutionary' phase, when the People's Militia and the State Security, the most discredited components of the communist regime, were abolished, helping to consolidate the security system. In the early 1990s, the powers of the Czechoslovak federation were gradually weakened, ultimately leading to the break-up of the federation and the creation of the independent security forces of the successor states, the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic.

This phase ended with the abolition of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic on 31 December 1992, but some of its aspects continued into the first months of the independent Czechia.

### **‘Stabilisation’**

The second, ‘stabilisation’ phase, was characterised by an effort to create a Czech security system with appropriate concepts and legislation. This phase started at around the time of the establishment of the independent Czech Republic and ended in the late 1990s, when important laws, the first version of the security strategy and some particular strategies were adopted (Mareš, 2010). We can also link the end of the second phase with the Czech accession to NATO in March 1996 (Karaffa, Hrinko, Zůna et al., 2022). In its final days the second phase blended with the third, ‘Europeanisation’ phase, in which Czechia accommodated its system, conceptions and laws to the planned accession to the EU and the new security environment following 9/11. This phase started in around 2001. Although joining the EU in 2004 was an important milestone for security policy, the phase was completed, as far as internal security was concerned, when Czechia became part of the Schengen Area in 2007. Some of the components of the system were reformed following an evaluation of their functions. This has been an ongoing process to the present day. Also connected with the closure of this phase was the Czech accommodation to new NATO and EU strategic concepts and to changes required by adoption of the Lisbon Treaty (Mareš, 2010).

### **2004–2015**

In the next phase, from 2004 to 2015, there were internal reorganisations and legislative adjustments to the security system, and the security agenda was then confronted with mass migration into Czechia in 2015 and the following years. The most recent phase started in February 2022, when the international political and security situation was changed by the escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, with the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine (Balabán, Pernica et al., 2015).

As the Czech security system has developed since 1989, there have been some major organisational changes, including:

- (1) The establishment of new security forces and authorities, such as the National Security Authority (NBÚ), the Department for the Protection of Constitutional Officials (ÚOÚČ) and the Security Information Service (BIS);
- (2) The establishment of the Integrated Rescue System (IZS) in 2001, which brings together fire fighters, paramedics and police. The aim of IZS is to increase the efficiency of the emergency services, e. g., in response to disasters and accidents;
- (3) The establishment of the National Cyber and Information Security Agency (NÚKIB), entrusted with providing security on the internet and protecting Czech information systems against cyber-attacks;
- (4) Changes in the prison system (humanisation, professionalization and modernisation) and the establishment of the Czech Prison Service in 1993;
- (5) The reorganisation, professionalization and modernisation of the Czech Armed Forces (having this name since 1993) (Mareš, 2010).

These are just some of the changes and milestones that have impacted Czech security policy since 1989.

## 5. The legislative framework and the actors of security policy

The security legislation defines the processes in internal and external security and creates the Czech security environment. This legislation is dealt with by the relevant government departments (in particular, the Ministries of the Interior and Defense), the National Security Council (BRS), parliament and the president.

Laws on security are adopted by the Parliament of the Czech Republic, which also has oversight over some of the security forces. Some of the committees and commissions, and the MPs and senators involved, therefore become important actors in the political processes in this area. This includes the Security Committee of the Chamber of Deputies (the lower chamber of the Czech parliament) and the Foreign Affairs, Defense and Security Committee of the Senate (the upper chamber), and the standing committees of the Chamber for oversight over the BIS, for control over the use of operational equipment of the police, for control over the National Security Authority (NBÚ) and the standing committee of the senate for the protection of privacy (Mareš, 2010).

The institutions providing internal security are the Ministry of the Interior (MV ČR), the police (officially the Police of the Czech Republic), the Fire Rescue Service, the Ministry of Finance, the Customs Administration, the Ministry of Justice, the Prison Service, the intelligence services (especially the Security Information Service), the General Inspectorate of Security Forces (GIBS) and Czech Post. The institutions providing mainly external security are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defense, the Armed Forces, the Military Police and the intelligence services (in particular Military Intelligence) (Balabán, Pernica et al., 2015).

The fundamental legislative framework for security policy is defined in the most important constitutional documents and in the major international treaties by which Czechia is bound.

In international law, Czechia is bound by all the fundamental norms, including the United Nations Charter and all customary and written, codified international law with security relevance. Concerning the specific international-legal obligations in the area of the state's relations with its citizens, including security issues, the following binding documents are important: the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (adopted as Act No. 120/1976 Coll. of Czech law) and the European Convention on Human Rights (Act No. 209/1992 Coll.) with several additional protocols. This document is part of the treaty system of the Council of Europe.

Since joining the EU, Czechia has adopted security commitments stemming from the *acquis communautaire*. In domestic law, security matters are outlined in the fundamental constitutional acts. Foremost among these is the Constitution of the Czech Republic (Act No. 1/1993 Coll.) and Constitutional Act No. 110/1998 Coll. on the Security of the Czech Republic. More detailed definitions of security situations, institutions, actions, authorisations and obligations are contained in a number of laws and subordinate legislation. If security is understood comprehensively, and if security policy permeates the most varied political sectors, then we need to bear in mind that the spectrum of legislation concerned with security issues is very broad, even when reduced to internal security (for more details, see Mareš, 2010; Tvrdá, 2018).

Legislatively and conceptually, the adoption of the 1998 Security Act was important, as it established the National Security Council (BRS), among other things. The first Czech security strategy was adopted in 1999. Thus the security system obtained its fundamental contours. In 2000, an act on crisis management and on the Integrated Rescue System were published in the Collection of Laws. They were in part informed by the experience of the tragic floods in 1997. The act on the Fire Rescue Service was published under the number 283/2000 Coll. (Mareš, 2010).



In addition to the already-mentioned constitutional and European laws, the most important legislation (as amended) concerning internal security policy includes:

- Act No. 2/1969 Coll., on the Establishment of Ministries and Other Central Authorities of State Administration;
- Act No. 239/2000 Coll., on the Integrated Rescue System and Amendments to Certain Acts;
- Act No. 361/2003 Coll., on the Service of Members of the Security Forces;
- Act No. 40/2009 Coll., the Criminal Code;
- Act No. 141/1961 Coll., on the Judicial Criminal Procedure (the Criminal Procedure Code).

Then there are acts concerning components of the security system (Act No. 153/1994 Coll., on the Intelligence Services of the Czech Republic; Act No. 273/2008 Coll., on the Police of the Czech Republic; Act No. 238/2000 Coll., on the Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic and Amendments to Certain Acts; Act No. 553/1991 Coll., on the Municipal Police; and others) (Mareš, 2010).

Alongside the legislative framework, the conceptual framework is very important for Czech security policy, although the process of establishing a stabilised and logical structure is still ongoing here. The main domestic document is the Security Strategy of the Czech Republic. This strategy should be followed up with strategic documents in the various sectors of security policy. Evaluation documents, implementation action plans and annual reports are often linked with the strategic security documents. Perhaps the most comprehensive conceptual document is the government's Crime Prevention Strategy.

Further security documents include:

- Strategy for Fighting Terrorism;
- Strategy for Fighting Extremism;
- Concept for Fighting Organised Crime;
- Government's Strategy in Fighting Corruption;
- National Anti-Drug Strategy;
- National Strategy for Fighting Human Trafficking;
- National Plan for Fighting Commercial Child Abuse;
- Concept for Fighting Crime in Information Technologies;
- Concept for Fighting Environmental Crime;
- Strategy for Czech Police Work Concerning Minorities;
- Concept for the Protection of the Populace;
- Concept for Fire Prevention (all concepts and strategies cited so far fall within the remit of the Ministry of the Interior);
- Concept for Developing the Czech Prison System (Ministry of Justice);
- Concept for Integrating Foreigners in the Czech Republic (Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs);
- Programme to support the Romani Community (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports);
- Strategy to Prevent Socially Pathological Phenomena in Children and Youth (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports);
- Health and Environment Action Plan (Ministry of Health);
- National Road Safety Strategy (Ministry of Transport).

Similarly to other areas, actors in security policy can be divided into state and non-state. Obviously, the character of the security policy predetermines the state actors for a dominant role, and the state continues to maintain a strong intervention role concerning the privatisation of security and people's individual action in the field of security (Mareš, 2010).

## 6. The Czech Security System

To ensure its security interests, Czechia ‘creates and develops a comprehensive, hierarchically organised security system, which links the following levels: policy (domestic and foreign), military, internal security and protection of the populace, economic, financial, legislative, legal and social’ (MZV ČR, 2015).

As an open institutional framework/instrument, the security system functions to manage and coordinate the actions of the various components responsible for ensuring Czech security interests (Tvrďá, 2018). The security system encompasses a number of actors: the president, parliament, the government, the National Security Council and its working bodies, the central administrative authorities, regional and district authorities, the armed forces, armed security forces, intelligence services, and emergency and rescue services (MZV ČR, 2015).

The Czech security system can therefore be defined as an ‘institutional tool for the creation and implementation of security policy, consisting of the corresponding elements of the legislative, executive and judicial power, territorial self-government, legal and natural persons who are responsible for ensuring the state’s security’ (Jakubcová and Šugár, 2013; Hrinko, 2021; Porada et al., 2019).

The security system must continuously respond to the changing security environment and emerging threats. For that reason, it must be an open and dynamically evolving system (Vilášek and Fus, 2012).

Constitutional Act No. 110/1998 Coll., on the Security of the Czech Republic, in Article 3 divides the entities of the security system into those that are obliged to ensure Czech security by law (it is their main task, they are established for this purpose and authorised to do so by corresponding laws) and those that only participate in ensuring security. Entities that ensure security by law are the:

- (1) Armed forces;
- (2) Armed security forces;
- (3) Rescue forces;
- (4) Emergency services.

Entities that participate in ensuring security are:

- (1) State authorities;
- (2) Authorities of territorial self-governing units;
- (3) Legal and natural persons (Jakubcová and Šugár, 2013; Porada et al., 2019).

The armed forces, armed security forces, intelligence services, rescue forces and emergency services are the executive parts of the security system as well as actors of policy. While, in the wording of the security strategy, the armed security forces, intelligence services and rescue forces are separate, for the purposes of Act No. 361/2003 Coll., the following are understood to be security forces: the police, Customs Administration, Prison Service, Fire Rescue Service (unarmed) and two intelligence services: the Security Information Service (BIS, the civilian domestic intelligence agency, subject to the government) and the Office for Foreign Relations and Information (ÚZSI, the civilian foreign intelligence agency, subject to the interior minister). The third Czech intelligence service, called Military Intelligence (VZ), is considered a specific security force, as is the Military Police. Neither is considered part of the Czech Armed Forces (Mareš, 2010).

In the current security strategy (of 2015), the elements and components of the security system are divided according to the character of their work into the following groups:

- (a) Diplomatic and consular service;
- (b) Intelligence services;

- (c) Instruments of defence policy: the Armed Forces, national and local government authorities, firms and citizens;
- (d) Instruments of internal security: the police and Fire Rescue Service, municipal police, the Armed Forces allocated as needed, emergency medical services and healthcare facilities, law enforcement authorities, non-governmental organisations, citizens and private security services;
- (e) Instruments of cyber security: the National Cyber and Information Security Agency (NÚKIB);
- (f) Crisis management as a subsystem and its bodies;
- (g) Instruments serving to prepare the population for crisis situations and emergencies and to increase societal resilience (Balabán and Pernica et al., 2015).

The ‘power ministries’ (these are the ministries of the interior, defence and foreign affairs) play a significant role. Crucial for internal security is the Ministry of the Interior, which is responsible for systemically managing the various aspects of internal security as well as the institutions and bodies that provide this security. The most important are the police, the Fire Rescue Service and the State Material Reserves Administration (SSHR) (Karaffa, Hrinko, Zůna et al., 2022). Other ministries are endowed with powers concerning internal security policy, including the Ministry of Finance (e. g., action against money laundering and terrorism funding), the Ministry of Justice (e. g., the prison system), the Ministry of Culture (affairs of churches and religious associations), the Ministry of Health (addictive substances), the Ministry of Industry and Trade (the testing of weapons and ammunition) and the Ministry of Transport (traffic safety). Other central authorities also play important roles, including the NBÚ (protection of classified information and security clearances) and the State Office for Nuclear Safety (SÚJB) (Mareš, 2010).

Also important is the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MZV ČR), which mainly ensures the agenda of international relations with other states, international organisations and institutions. Topics of international security appear within this broadly conceived agenda (including coordination of central government authorities and the protection of Czech citizens abroad, including in natural disasters and armed conflicts).

MZV ČR also controls embassies, prepares and coordinates the negotiation of international treaties etc. This incomplete list of this ministry’s activities reveals that it is chiefly concerned with the external security agenda.

The Ministry of Defense (MO ČR), which is responsible for the agenda of Czech defence, is an important ministry in terms of the Czech security agenda. It is a central government authority that coordinates the agenda concerning Czech military defence policy, implements the Czech defence concept, cooperates with other states’ armed forces under applicable international treaties etc. The MO ČR also guides the preparation of citizens to defend the state and undertakes educational and enlightenment campaigns in this area; makes known its views on territorial development policy and planning documents concerning Czech defence interests; and maintains a register of facilities important for the defence of the state and of buildings that might be attacked under a state of national peril or war.

In general, the MO ČR sponsors the provisioning of Czech defence and coordinates the Armed Forces. Among the most important entities from the perspective of Czech security policy are the Military Police (VP) and Military Intelligence (VZ). According to Act No. 219/1999 Coll., on the Armed Forces, the VP is not a part of the Armed Forces. Its tasks are to uncover crime within the MO ČR, to establish the perpetrators and to take measures to prevent crime. The VP oversees traffic safety of Armed Forces vehicles and the safety of operations at military facilities. It provides protection to important military facilities. It fulfils the tasks of police protection and escort of designated persons and military materiel. It is involved in ensuring discipline and order at military facilities and among Armed Forces personnel

in public. The VP is led by a chief who is directly subordinated to the minister of the interior (Karaffa, Hrinko, Zůna et al., 2022). VP also develops capabilities to carry out military-police tasks in operations outside Czechia, with a focus on training, mentoring and monitoring local police forces. The VP has an appropriate system to resolve crisis situations.

The functioning of the security system, the build-up and development of capabilities of its various components, its economic and financial security – all of this is part of a long-term and demanding process that uses practical experience obtained from solving various crisis situations, but also from systematic preparation (e. g., in the form of various exercises) and preventative action taken by the various forces.

It is appropriate to see the security system as a set of cooperating security forces, organisations, institutions and non-state actors. This is one of the reasons why the sections that follow describe the security forces introduced above, that is, the police, the Customs Administration, the Prison Service and the General Inspectorate of Security Forces (see Mareš and Novák, 2019). I also discuss the role of the Integrated Rescue System, a concept in which the synergistic effect of cooperation among its various components is very pronounced.

## **7. Summary**

Security policy is a key element of statehood and strategic thinking in any era. The complexity of security policy lies in its integration of political, diplomatic, technological, environmental, cultural and moral elements.

The main objective of Czech security policy is to protect the interests of the state, its citizens and other values. The development of society and scientific interest have led to an expanded view of security, including individual and group security. As we see in ongoing conflicts, the defence of the state remains essential, but there is also an increasing emphasis on the protection of individuals, which to some extent indicates a shift in the paradigm of security policy. This is also reflected in the interdependence of national security policies, as well as international security cooperation within various platforms (the EU, NATO, UN, etc.).

This article has focused on contemporary Czech security policy, which began to transform in the period after 1989, or after the establishment of an independent Czech Republic in 1993. The development of security policy has had several phases, which were presented in the introduction of the chapter.

Czech security policy has been defined as a set of constantly evolving strategies, capabilities, measures, resources and instruments to defend the interests of the country, combining political, diplomatic, technological, economic, environmental, cultural and moral factors and aspects.

The topic of security policy has been presented in the form of an overview of basic security legislation, individual key institutions involved in the security system, and in terms of security-relevant topics (or threats and risks for the country).

The specific Czech security environment, which is significantly influenced by the processes of globalisation and Europeanisation, has also been described. The Czech security environment is significantly influenced and shaped by dynamic changes in the global and international security environment, which is also reflected in specific security threats and risks. For this reason, internal and external security threats influence and condition each other, or combine together. This is one of the reasons why the Czech security system cannot be a static apparatus. The country has to deal with many threats and challenges, which are, among others, listed in the current Security Strategy, which is a key document for Czech security policy (see MZV ČR 2015). These issues undoubtedly include: international and possible domestic terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their

delivery systems, cyber-attacks (and related leaks of strategically important information), cyber-crime, hybrid warfare, regional and international conflicts and their consequences for the country (e. g., in the form of massive migration from Ukraine after February 2022, massive migration from the Middle East or Africa etc.), radicalisation of Czech citizens due to the deteriorating security and economic situation (e. g., due to inflation, significant reduction of real wages, increase in unemployment, increase in violent and ethnic crime, corruption and rise of foreign organised crime groups, increasing number of socially excluded areas, insufficient provision of energy supply, etc.). Another significant area is natural disasters, which are difficult to predict, but often have a fatal impact on the security situation, the lives and health of the population, as well as impacts on the economy, the epidemiological and health situation of the population, and the functionality of critical infrastructure (Porada et al., 2019).

From the perspective of security developments in Europe, including in the context of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict, the topic of so-called foreign fighters who will subsequently return to Czechia are also significant, as was the case with foreign fighters from the so-called Islamic State or similar conflicts in the past (Slepecký et al., 2019).

Although the likelihood of a direct threat to the Czech territory by a massive military attack cannot be completely ruled out, one can agree with Porada et al. (2019) that this situation is unlikely. Nevertheless, operations in the information (cyber) space may acquire the character of so-called hybrid warfare (Danics and Smolík, 2023). Cyberspace is an important operational area of conflict, where not necessarily nation-states, but also other non-state actors (including terrorist groups, hacker groups, etc.) stand against each other. It can be assumed that, in the coming years, cyberspace in particular will be an important area that will affect the technological (information) security of developed countries (MZV ČR, 2015). Therefore, the so-called societal resilience to information and psychological operations is gaining importance.

Due to the increased dynamics of the security environment in Central Europe and beyond, the Czech security system must respond adequately and promptly to new security challenges. This concerns not only all of the areas described above, but also education, where it is necessary to train security experts for specific positions in the security system (e. g., experts on cyber threats, specialists in combating organised crime, and members of the security forces and secret services).

Overall, my study is predominantly descriptive in nature, but it can be assumed that this work can serve as a basis for certain future research areas. In my opinion, it can be used as a stable pillar for comparative work between the security policies and institutional frameworks of the Visegrad Group countries. The legitimacy of this work in itself is created by the former.

## References

- [1] Balabán, M. et al. (2005). *Bezpečnostní budoucnost České republiky. Otázky, výzvy, problémy*. Praha.
- [2] Balabán, M., Pernica, B. et al. (2015). *Bezpečnostní systém ČR: problémy a výzvy*. Praha.
- [3] Buzan, B., Waeber, O., Wilde, de J. (2005). *Bezpečnost: nový rámec pro analýzu*. Brno.
- [4] Danics, Š., Smolík, J. (2023). Czech Security Policy in the Context of the Hybrid Warfare in Ukraine. In: Kancik-Kořtun, E. (ed.). *30 Years of the Visegrad Group. Vol. 3. The war in Ukraine and the policy of the V4 countries*. Lublin.
- [5] Danics, Š., Strnad, Š. (2016). *Aspekty bezpečnosti*. Praha.
- [6] Dubský, Z. et al. (2019). *Destabilizace bezpečnostního prostředí na počátku 21. století a reakce*

- mezinárodního společenství*. Praha.
- [7] Eichler, J. (2006). *Mezinárodní bezpečnost na počátku 21. století*. Praha.
- [8] Hrinko, M. (2021). *Bezpečnostní hrozby a veřejný pořádek*. Praha.
- [9] Jakubcová, L., Šugár, J. (2013). *Bezpečnost a krizové řízení*. Praha.
- [10] Karaffa, V., Hrinko, M., Zůna, J. et al. (2022). *Vybrané kapitoly o bezpečnosti*. Praha.
- [11] Mareš, M. (2002). Bezpečnost. In: Zeman, P. (ed.). *Česká bezpečnostní terminologie*. Brno.
- [12] Mareš, M. (2010). Bezpečnostní politika. In: Balík, S., Císař, O., Fiala, P. et al. (eds.). *Veřejné politiky v České republice v letech 1989–2009*. Brno.
- [13] Mareš, M., Novák, D. (2019). *Ústavní zákon o bezpečnosti České republiky. Komentář*. Praha.
- [14] MZV ČR (2015). *Bezpečnostní strategie České republiky*. Praha.
- [15] Porada, V. et al. (2019). *Bezpečnostní vědy*. Plzeň.
- [16] Rektorič, J. et al. (2004). *Krizový management ve veřejné správě. Teorie a praxe*. Praha.
- [17] Slepecký, J. et al. (2019). *Bezpečnostní prostředí v Evropě – radikalizace, terorismus a ochrana obyvatelstva*. České Budějovice.
- [18] Smolík, J. (2014). *Úvod do studia mezinárodních vztahů*. Praha.
- [19] Tvrdá, K. (2018). *Vnitřní bezpečnostní sbory a zpravodajské služby ve střední Evropě. Mapování proměn vnitřního bezpečnostního pole na případech České republiky, Maďarska, Polska a Slovenska*. Brno.
- [20] Vilášek, J., Fus, J. (2012). *Krizové řízení v ČR na počátku 21. století*. Praha.
- [21] Waisová, Š. et al. (2003). *Bezpečnost a strategie. Východiska – Stav – Perspektivy*. Dobrá Voda u Pelhřimova.
- [22] Zeman, P. (2002). Česká bezpečnostní terminologie, její zdroje a stav. In: Zeman, P. (ed.). *Česká bezpečnostní terminologie*. Brno.