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NATIONAL POLICE OF UKRAINE AND THE POLISH POLICE: CHALLENGES DURING THE WAR IN UKRAINE – SELECTED PROBLEMS

Abstract

This author outlines the main challenges faced by the National Police of Ukraine (*NPU*), operating under extremely difficult wartime conditions. She also discusses the *NPU*'s role in sustaining Ukrainian statehood and the activities of the Polish Police in response to the evolving external environment, as well as the support provided to the *NPU* to enhance its competencies and capabilities. The challenges, which by law concern mainly security and public order, are gradually taking on an international dimension, regardless of the ongoing armed conflict. In the contemporary context, there is an urgent need for sharing experience and data, as well as for intensified joint operational and investigative activities, particularly in combating organized crime and terrorist threats. This article is based on an analysis of selected literature, including online resources, such as accounts and interviews, and employs the methods of deduction, induction and synthesis.

Keywords: Police, war, crime, internal security threats

Introduction

The war in Ukraine, especially during its second phase that began on 24th February, 2022, has forced the state system to operate under continuous threat while performing, alongside its usual tasks, new responsibilities that were often not categorized before and for which established practices and legal regulations had not been developed yet. The conflict escalated into a conventional aggression by the Russian Federation, culminating in an actual war, whereas martial law was declared in Ukraine by the president of the state, Volodymyr Zelensky. The functioning of the entire state apparatus, including the National Police of Ukraine (*NPU*), is now affected by this emergency state. The situation is complicated even further by

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the fact that the stability of public authorities in Ukraine is perceived by the world powers through the prism of the NPU's performance.

The National Police of Ukraine is the central executive authority serving the public by protecting human rights and freedoms, counteracting crime, as well as maintaining security and public order.¹ Currently, there is no area in Ukraine that can be considered stable and free from crime. For years, the main challenges have been organized crime and corruption at all levels. New threats have also emerged, so the NPU has formed departments concerned with diversion and sabotage activities, land mine disposal, protection of the buildings damaged by bombs, as well documentation of Russian war crimes.² Since the 1990s, Ukraine has been a corridor for major transnational smuggling activity between Russia and Western Europe. Efforts to combat organized crime and corruption, particularly since the Maidan revolution in 2014, have failed to achieve the results expected by European states, especially regarding police and judicial reforms.

The armed conflict in Donbas has intensified illegal activity, resulting in a new reality that poses immense challenges for the National Police of Ukraine, which is not a large force,³ yet one responsible for maintaining public order even in active war zones. These duties include supervision over internal and external migration, safeguarding key installations and equipment, protecting the local population and participating in direct operations. Generally, the NPU operates both in the areas occupied by the Russian Federation and those free from Russian forces. It must be noted that performing daily operations, however, poses significant risks to NPU officers due to ongoing gunfire, the need to operate in mined areas, and the limitations imposed by war-related destruction and hardship of daily life, as well as the necessity for enforcing the restrictions imposed by the martial law.

New Reality as a Matter of Fact and Truth

One of the special tasks that National Ukrainian Police officers perform is documenting war crimes, which involves collecting material evidence, preparing reports based on testimonies and witness

¹ For more about the National Police of Ukraine, see the Act No. 580-VIII of the Parliament (*Verkhovna Rada*) of Ukraine of 02 July, 2015 – <http://rada.gov.ua> (31.10.2024).

² P. Hac, *Mniej Znany Front. Ukraińscy policjanci na wojnie*, "Stołeczny Magazyn Policyjny", 2023, No. 3, pp. 18–20.

³ Before the war, the NPU was estimated to have 120,000 officers, including vacancies. This number is currently different due to personnel losses within the NPU.

hearings, as well as participating in the exhumation of bodies.⁴ Polish Police officers,⁵ together with prosecutors from Poland and other countries, assist Ukraine in documenting these crimes through specially designated teams.⁶ Operating behind the front lines, the NPU strives to bring the territories abandoned by Russian troops back to life and restore local populations.⁷ The conditions that officers encounter are often unimaginable, and the conditions in which they work are far from safe. Identification of war victims is an important component of these operations.

The atrocities of war lead to a different perception of many previously respected values. Some individuals commit crimes to survive, while others take advantage of the opportunities present by the current chaos for personal gain, which must be countered by the NPU in either case. This shift in motivation has led to the changes in criminal behaviour. During the early stage of the Ukrainian state's operation under war conditions, the occurrence of criminal acts was limited, but later, the scale of criminal offences increased drastically. Simultaneous threats to life, health, and property are often linked to careless use of weapons, munitions and explosives available from either army depots or semi-legal caches. The notorious types of crime faced by the NPU include the activity of the criminal groups involved in human trafficking, kidnappings for ransom, the 'services' consisting in ensuring the release of a particular person from Russian captivity, as well as the exploitation of wartime shortages, thefts from the warehouses where essential supplies are stored, and the trade in deficit goods, such as bulletproof vests and power generators (which are of vital importance, given that daily life in Ukraine depends on the access to electricity, whereas power supply is limited due to continual Russian attacks against the critical heat and power stations). Drug-related crime, particularly involving synthetic substances, has risen manifestly as well, boosted by the growing demand from the soldiers on the front line.

⁴ At the beginning of 2023, reports indicated more than 65,000 cases of war crimes.

⁵ Polish Police officers, including counter-terrorist unit members, support the NPU not only in the field of documenting war crimes but also in other activities, in particular those within the framework of humanitarian policing, especially as regards detection of explosives, protection of critical infrastructure and related operations.

⁶ The establishment of a joint investigative team by Ukraine, Poland and Lithuania in response to Russia's attack on Ukraine took place on 25th March, 2022, at the Korczowa border crossing. See: *Prokuratorzy pionu PZ Prokuratury Krajowej dokumentowali dowody rosyjskich zbrodni na Ukrainie*, gov.pl, <https://www.gov.pl> (30.10.2024).

⁷ *Jak wojna z Rosją zmieniła służbę policjantów*, Infosecurity24, <https://infosecurity24.pl> (31.10.2024).

In 2020, Ukraine adopted the National Strategy for the Prevention of Organized Crime, although its implementation faced significant challenges, including a lack of judicial reform. Paradoxically, the Russian invasion in 2022 shattered the working structure of the criminal underworld, as the cooperation between Russian and Ukrainian criminal groups became impossible due to political tensions and restrictions. In its 2023 report on the current state of the war in Ukraine and its influence on organized crime, the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime notes that the Ukrainian Security Service (*SBU*) enlisted local criminals to help detect Russian groups tasked by Moscow with destabilizing the operation of the Ukrainian state, which resulted in the detention of most members of such saboteur groups within a few months – such an approach has been seen in other armed conflicts as well.⁸ Three waves of amnesty were granted to prisoners intended for deployment to the front, allowing over 360 individuals to return to freedom. However, it would be naive to assume that all of them conformed to the amnesty conditions approved by President Volodymyr Zelensky.

Supporting the Ukrainian police

For many years, effective international cooperation has been carried out within the framework of the Member States of the European Union, which has enabled the introduction of appropriate legal regulations into national legislation, including the Police Act, in accordance with the EU requirements. Poland has developed its own cooperation models, based on experience and best practices. This is also the result of the police collaboration or officer secondments within the EU Member States, as well as participation in training sessions, conferences, study visits, and webinars.⁹ International police cooperation in Poland is implemented on the basis of governmental and ministerial legal acts, as well as the EU documents, particularly those relating to border cooperation. The main focus of these activities is operational cooperation, which primarily involves the exchange of information¹⁰ and related activities aimed at developing

⁸ *Za granicą rozpadł się najsilniejszy ekosystem przestępczy w Europie. Gdzie powstanie nowa przemysłowa superautostrada?*, Infosecurity24, <https://infosecurity24.pl> (31.10.2024).

⁹ M. Dobrowolska-Opala, *Zaangażowanie polskiej Policji we współpracę międzynarodową*, “*Studia Politologiczne*”, 2019, Vol. 51.

¹⁰ This cooperation is conducted in particular within the framework of the Schengen Information System (SIS) and the SIRENE National Office (for the Schengen Area countries), EUROPOL (the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation),

shared practices. This work is facilitated by specialized contact points operating at both external and internal borders of the EU, namely Police and Customs Cooperation Centres operating at Poland's borders with the Czech Republic, Germany, and Slovakia. The international dimension of the Polish Police activity is also manifest in its participation in foreign peacekeeping missions in countries such as Ukraine, Georgia, Kosovo, and South Sudan.

The Polish Police had cooperated with the Ukrainian Police at various levels also before 2022. This cooperation included joint operations targeting criminal activity, as well as patrolling and other activities within the framework of the assistance projects for Ukraine. Delegations from both forces met regularly in Poland and Ukraine – a well-established practice that yielded measurable benefits in the execution of the services' statutory duties.

The European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine¹¹ was established by a decision of the Council of the European Union on 22nd July, 2014. Within the framework of the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy mechanism, the mission provides support for the reform of Ukraine's civilian public security system by conducting strategic advisory work and offering practical assistance in implementing specific reform projects, in line with the EU and international standards of the rule of law and respect for human rights. The mission aims to strengthen Ukraine's security sector, composed of two key components: the military one, which comprises the armed forces and the National Guard, and the civilian one, which includes the authorities responsible for law enforcement and upholding the rule of law, such as the Ministry of Interior, the

INTERPOL (the International Criminal Police Organisation), as well as through Polish Police liaison officers stationed in the EU Member States (France, Spain, Germany, Croatia, Hungary and Italy) and in some countries outside the EU (the United Kingdom, Norway, Georgia, Turkey, Ukraine and the United States of America) and foreign liaison officers accredited in Poland. This collaboration also provides direct access to police databases (on missing and wanted persons, fingerprint cards, DNA profiles, stolen vehicles, documents, etc.). See: *Współpraca międzynarodowa*, Policja.pl, <https://info.policja.pl> (31.10.2024).

¹¹ The European Union Advisory Mission (EUAM) Ukraine is a non-executive mission of the European Union, which formally opened its headquarters in Kyiv on 01 December, 2014, in the aftermath of the Maidan Revolution of 2013–2014 and at the invitation of the Ukrainian Government. The EUAM Ukraine mission is to support Ukraine's leadership in carrying out sustainable reform of the civilian security sector through strategic advice and practical assistance for specific reform measures, based on the EU standards and international principles of good governance and human rights. Its goal is to create a civilian security sector that is effective, accountable, and enjoys the trust of the public – *Polska Pomoc*, Gov.pl, <https://www.gov.pl> (26.03.2025).

National Police, the Security Service of Ukraine, the State Border Guard, the Office of the Prosecutor General, as well as local courts. Civil society's anti-corruption bodies and the Parliament of Ukraine have also been involved in this agenda.

Several projects have been implemented as part of these cooperation initiatives. Among others, a two-day training course was held in Kyiv for forty officers of the National Police of Ukraine, and a study visit combined with training was organized in Poland for six NPU officers specializing in domestic violence intervention. The training was addressed to Kyiv police officers who routinely respond to incidents of family violence. This training resulted from the Polish programme "Implementation and Use of Tools Facilitating Police Intervention to Counter Domestic Violence", implemented within the Polish Aid (*Polska Pomoc*) development cooperation initiative of Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project was delivered by Polish Police officers from the Police Headquarters in Kraków in 2020,¹² focusing on the prevention of and response to domestic violence.

The topic was hardly accidental at the time due to the concurrent changes toughening the applicable laws in Poland and the new powers granted to Polish Police, allowing officers to issue immediate restraining orders for individuals posing a threat to the life or health of victims to vacate their dwellings shared with such victims and the victims' immediate surroundings, or orders prohibiting perpetrators from approaching those areas. The project emphasized the creation of an effective system for protection of the people affected by domestic violence.

From 27th to 29th September, 2021, a study visit by police officers from Kyiv took place as a part of the above-mentioned project, during which a detailed plan for the implementation of the training dedicated to Ukrainian officers was presented. The Polish Police provided an overview of the legal aspects, methods, and forms of intervention in the cases of domestic violence. The participants also discussed in detail the risk assessment questionnaire and the procedure for issuing restraining orders or bans requiring perpetrators to leave their place of residence. Additionally, Kyiv officers were able to familiarize themselves with the daily service of Polish Police officers carrying out the tasks related to domestic violence cases, as well as the operations of their branch and the duties involved.

Following the outbreak of the second stage of the Russian–Ukrainian war on 24th February, 2022, the focus of cooperation shifted

¹² Podjęcie współpracy z Narodową Policją Ukrainą w obszarze przeciwdziałania, Policja.pl, <https://policja.pl> (26.03.2025).

significantly towards providing direct specific assistance to the Ukrainian Police, while any project- and training-based cooperation became of secondary importance, adapted to the current possibilities and dynamically changing situation.¹³ Regardless of the wartime hostilities in Ukraine, this cooperation has continued uninterrupted. One example of this collaboration was the joint operation conducted by the Central Bureau of Investigation of the Polish Police (CBŚP) and Ukrainian NPU in August, 2024, which led to the dismantling of the largest laboratory discovered to date producing methadone in crystalline form. Moreover, eight other multi-purpose laboratories were shut down in Poland and Ukraine, where synthetic cathinones such as mephedrone, α -PVP, and methadone were being manufactured.¹⁴

Effective operations within the framework of cross-border cooperation play a crucial role in enhancing the security of partner states against the threats resulting from international organized crime. Most joint criminal investigations focus on operational activities aimed at combating human trafficking, smuggling, the illegal trade in weapons, narcotics, and stolen vehicles. The cooperation with the National Police of Ukraine is not limited to cross-border activities, as it is increasingly concerned also with the rise in the criminal activity related to the growing Ukrainian diaspora in Poland. In this regard, of particular importance are joint efforts to counteract Russian-speaking criminal groups active in Poland, as well as the exchange of operational information, and the mutual training of police officers.

The support extended by the Polish Police to their Ukrainian counterparts has both material and non-material dimensions. Among the assistance provided to Ukraine through Poland's Government Strategic Reserves Agency were three helicopters transferred from the resources of the Polish Police. These helicopters were handed over to the Kharkiv National University of Internal Affairs,¹⁵ where they are now used for the future pilots' training and flight classes. A similar transfer of police equipment and vehicles to the Ukrainian Police had taken place earlier, including after the outbreak of hostilities in Ukraine in 2014.

Material support for Ukraine arriving from other countries outside Poland also involved Polish Police officers, who assisted in securing

¹³ This information was obtained from the Polish Police Headquarters in response to a request for public information submitted under the provisions of the Access to Public Information Act of 06 September, 2001 (Journal of Laws, 2002, Item 902). Letter from the Polish Police Headquarters of 21 January, 2025, ref. No.: POP-54/25/JK.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 1.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 2.

transport and ensuring the safe unloading of aid convoys from abroad. The in-kind aid supplied to the Ukrainian Police included personal protective equipment such as bulletproof vests, helmets, ballistic shields, and climbing gear for explosive ordnance technicians, as well as boots, uniforms without Polish insignia, jackets, radios with chargers, battery-powered torches, and power banks.¹⁶ Additional supplies comprised hygiene and medical materials, intravenous fluids, bandages, medications, long-life food, and clothing. Equally important, though perhaps less noticeable, was the support for Ukrainian civilians. Numerous preventive and educational initiatives were organized or co-organized, during which young people learned about safety principles and received information leaflets and educational materials. Polish Police officers also engaged in other projects aimed at enhancing the safety of Ukrainian citizens: preventive actions were carried out, among other things, to warn against fraudsters exploiting human compassion aroused by the war in Ukraine.

A particularly significant support initiative was the project implemented by the Polish Police Headquarters entitled “Documenting War Damage for Ukrainian and International Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities”, which has been carried out, since 2024, under the Polish Aid (*Polska Pomoc*) programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This project continued the earlier cooperation between the Polish and Ukrainian Police concerning the provision of the equipment and specialist training. In 2023, the same project had been implemented under the title “Gathering Evidence by 3D Laser Scanners During the Inspection of Events Resulting from Disasters, Terrorist Attacks or Acts of War”.

The most important activities undertaken during the second stage of the cooperation involved organizing training in Kyiv for fifteen officers of the National Police of Ukraine serving in eastern Ukraine, in the areas directly affected by the armed conflict. This training was held from 18th to 22nd November, 2024, and covered both theoretical and practical components.¹⁷ The theoretical part dealt with the legal foundations and applicable standards in this area, while the practical section focused on the training in the use of specialized equipment for criminal procedure, repairing war damage, professionalization of forensic work and the methodology and practice of making photographic documentation of evidence.

As part of this initiative, sixteen equipment sets were donated to the NPU, each consisting of a modern camera with the necessary equipment

¹⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷ *Polska pomoc dla Ukrainy*, Policja.pl, <https://policja.pl> (26.03.2025).

such as two lenses, a flash unit and a tripod, whereas NPU officers were given practical training in the operation of the donated equipment.¹⁸ The sessions were conducted by Polish specialists, mainly officers with prior experience in assisting Ukrainian prosecutors in documenting war damage through 3D scanning and forensic photography in the years 2022–2023. These earlier missions of Polish investigators were undertaken in response to the requests from the Ukrainian side as part of cooperation within the Joint Investigation Team (JIT).¹⁹ The JIT was established on 25th March, 2022, at the Korczowa border crossing, by Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania, following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Two missions were subsequently carried out, during which operations took place in the regions of Kyiv and Mykolaiv (first mission), and Sumy and Chernihiv (second mission). The first mission took place between 20th June and 1st July, 2022, and involved the inspection of eleven buildings. Two prosecutors from the National Prosecutor's Office and nine police officers participated in these activities. The second mission involved the examination of ten buildings destroyed by bombings, artillery or rocket fire and drone attacks, including hospitals, schools, kindergartens, police stations, and multi-family residential buildings.²⁰

Another form of cooperation was the implementation of the project "Inspection of Road Accident Sites Using a Total Station".²¹ This training, held at the Police Training Centre in Legionowo in September, 2024, was conducted by expert instructors from the Department of Specialist Training. Twelve officers of the National Police of Ukraine were trained in Polish methods and standards of examining road accident sites using total stations. The project aimed to strengthen the professional competencies of NPU forensic technicians and to facilitate the exchange of experience in complex technical and forensic operations, such as road accident site analysis.

¹⁸ Letter from the Polish Police Headquarters of 21 January, 2025..., p. 4.

¹⁹ In agreement with Poland's Ministry of the Interior and Administration, and on the initiative of the Polish Police Headquarters, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs co-financed two projects proposed by the Criminal Bureau of the Polish Police Headquarters: "Gathering Evidence Using 3D Laser Scanners During the Investigation of Events Resulting from Disasters, Terrorist Attacks, or Acts of War" (PLN 623,043.60) and "Documenting War Damage for Ukrainian and International Law Enforcement and Judicial Authorities" (PLN 589,321.40) – *Polska pomoc dla Ukrainy*...

²⁰ Letter from the Polish Police Headquarters of 21 January, 2025.... p. 4.

²¹ The public administration bodies' projects selected for implementation under the Polish Cooperation for Development Programme 2024 included "Inspection of Road Accident Sites Using a Total Station", with a budget of PLN 418,691 – *Polska pomoc dla Ukrainy*...

The Police Training Centre in Legionowo also organized international training for fifteen officers of the National Police of Ukraine on “Outdoor Examinations of Dead Bodies at the Place of Discovery”.²² Given the challenges that wartime conditions impose on NPU officers, every opportunity to enhance their professional competence – including their skills in forensic techniques such as the external examination of bodies at the scene of discovery – is of great significance. This knowledge is used by the NPU officers in the performance of their daily duties.

At the turn of December, 2024, officers from the Independent Counterterrorism Subdivision of the Police in Lublin organized specialized training (in the Lublin Region in Poland) for fifteen officers from the NPU pyrotechnic teams representing the regions of Volhynia, Ternopil and Dnipropetrovsk. This was made possible through the implementation of the project “Training Support for Ukrainian Police Officers from Pyrotechnic Units in the Field of Pyrotechnic Activities in the De-occupied Areas of Ukraine”.²³ The initiative was carried out within the framework of the Cooperation for Development 2024 programme financed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

Operations in the field of land mine detection, clearance and explosive ordnance disposal in Ukraine are a typical challenge related to war, as well as a priority in the months following the cessation of hostilities, enabling the safe return of civilians to the demined areas and their safe residence there. The extensive experience of Polish counterterrorist officers in such activities has long been valued and sought after. For Ukrainian officers, in turn, such operations constitute part of their day-

²² *Międzynarodowe szkolenie w ramach programu MSZ Polska Pomoc*, Centrum Szkolenia Policji, <https://csp.edu.pl> (02.04.2025).

²³ *Szkolenie policjantów z jednostek specjalnych do działań minersko-pirotechnicznych*, Lubelska Policja, <https://lubelska.policja.gov.pl> (02.04.2025). The public administration bodies’ projects selected for implementation under the Polish Cooperation for Development Programme 2024 included “Training Support for Ukrainian Police Officers from Pyrotechnic Units in the Field of Pyrotechnic Activities in De-occupied Ukraine”, with a budget of PLN 314,775.00. The project’s main objective was to enhance the competence of Ukrainian police officers in the methods and forms of preparation for mine-clearing and pyrotechnic operations, as a key element in developing professionalism and transparency in the service of public safety and security. It was consistent with the national and local legal framework, including the key reforms arising from the EU Association Agreement, and aimed to identify potential solutions for improving the effectiveness of pyrotechnic services within the broader enhancement of crisis-response operational capacity in, inter alia, demining zones – *Polska pomoc dla Ukrainy...*

to-day professional duties. During the training, much attention was devoted to developing practical skills, using locally available tools, resources, and technical methods.

The War in Ukraine as a Challenge for Poland

The war in Ukraine has also affected the scope of the tasks faced by the police in Poland, posing several challenges for the country's public administration. These include the cases indirectly linked to the ongoing conflict, such as providing medical treatment for the injured, as well as offering the necessary humanitarian, social, and legal assistance.

The Police of the Podkarpackie Region – one directly bordering Ukraine – had to face new challenges. Firstly, there are the threats arising directly from the military operations taking place near Poland, accompanied by constantly intensified disinformation campaigns.²⁴ Secondly, the Rzeszów-Jasionka Airport has become a key transit zone for the VIP delegations from around the world travelling to the conflict area. Police officers were therefore responsible for ensuring the security of these visits, while simultaneously performing their usual task of maintaining public order and security across the region. Thirdly, further responsibilities arose from the need to support the garrisons in the Lubelskie and Podlaskie regions adjacent to the Belarusian border, in addition to – fourthly – the ongoing commitments related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which also imposed certain duties on the police.

During a meeting of the Regional Crisis Management Team, based on the guidelines from Police Headquarters and in the National Crisis Management Plan, an assessment of the key threats specific to the Podkarpackie region was conducted.²⁵ These included potential acts of sabotage, attacks against groups of people or facilities, espionage, threats arising from nationalist or racist motives, hazards linked to disruptions in transport and road traffic, as well as possible social threats.

In practice, the Police in Poland, particularly in the Podkarpackie region, had to counter a number of significant threats, which also included

²⁴ Disinformation activities conducted in connection with the armed conflict in Ukraine may be analysed in terms of information and ideological security, both of which have a significant impact on public order and security – see: M. Waksmundzka-Szarek, P. Zalewski, *Zagrożenia dezinformacyjne związane z masowym napływem uchodźców z Ukrainy na teren województwa podkarpackiego*, [in:] *Wybrane elementy zagrożeń hybrydowych*, ed. by J. Nowicka, Z. Ciekanowski, S. Żurawski, Warszawa 2024, p. 364.

²⁵ P. Zalewski, J. Kiszka, W. Franchuk, *Subcarpathian Police Management during the 2022 Armed Conflict in Ukraine*, "Security Dimensions", 2024, No. 48, pp. 1–2.

human trafficking. This problem, closely linked to migration, intensified during the early stages of the war, when large uncontrolled population movements occurred after 24th February, 2022. Despite the enormous pressure, all the available means and resources of state administration bodies, local government, non-government organizations, welfare organizations and volunteers were mobilized to mitigate these risks, including the danger of terrorist incidents, violation of public order and exploitation of disadvantaged and vulnerable refugees by human traffickers and criminal groups.²⁶

The events taking place in the contemporary world have largely influenced the character, dynamics, and directions of the migratory processes affecting Poland. In the early decades of the 21st century, Poland evolved from a country of potential emigrants²⁷ into an important transit point on major migration routes. Among these, the route through Belarus to Poland and further into other EU states has become a deliberate instrument of hybrid pressure from Russia and Belarus, designed to destabilize the security of Poland and the European Union as a whole. Poland is also a destination for economic, educational, and war-related migration (refugee migration) stemming from the war in Ukraine. This shift in the migration trends is not accidental: it reflects both Poland's EU membership and the fact that its eastern and south-eastern borders constitute the external frontier of the European Union and the Schengen Area.

The proximity of war, the lack of regional stability, along with the threats to the security of the Baltic States and Poland, have also redirected the focus of the regional cooperation towards strengthening the capabilities for mutual security-oriented cooperation.²⁸ This has become particularly evident since the so-called Risk Declaration of 2023 and in the context of the awareness of Hungarian and Slovak policies regarding the Russian-Ukrainian conflict.

²⁶ M. Waksmundzka-Szarek, P. Zalewski, *Ryzyko handlu ludźmi w sytuacji kryzysu uchodźczego na pograniczu województwa podkarpackiego – wybrane problemy*, "Polityka i Społeczeństwo", 2024, No. 2(22), p. 265.

²⁷ M. Waksmundzka-Szarek, P. Zalewski, *Nielegalne działania cudzoziemców w procesie legalizacji pobytu w Polsce ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem województwa podkarpackiego. Analiza wybranych podatności i metod*, "Polityka i Społeczeństwo", 2024, No. 4(22), pp. 288-290.

²⁸ This primarily applies to the '3+1 format', that is a political cooperation framework between Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, which focuses mainly on the issues of Central European security, including energy security. It represents a response to the crisis within the Visegrád Group (V4), where recent years have seen a growing divergence in the assessment of the events and a lack of a unified position on key matters – see: T. Żornaczuk [et al.], *Współpraca regionalna w Europie Środkowej po agresji Rosji na Ukrainę – zmiany i perspektywy. Raport PISM*, Warszawa 2024, p. 5.

Conclusions

Adapting to the challenges faced by the National Police of Ukraine is also significant for the Polish Police. The trends reflecting the seriousness of the current situation in Ukraine may be already seen in Polish statistics on organized crime, the dynamics of which have increased. Specialists warn of the similarities to the criminal surge experienced in Poland during the 1990s, and of the potential for its recurrence. An increase in certain categories of cross-border crime – for example, robbery²⁹ – linked to the migration of population from Ukraine was already noted several years ago, inter alia by the Polish Police officers working in Ukraine after the first stage of Russian aggression in 2014.

The war in Ukraine is undoubtedly a serious challenge for Ukrainian society and the state as a whole. The destruction and temporary Russian occupation caused by warfare have generated new phenomena and exacerbated the already existing problems. Among these, one of the most alarming issues drawing the attention of NPU officers is the mass deportation of Ukrainian children to the Russian Federation,³⁰ which constitutes another unacceptable violation of international law.

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²⁹ *Służba w cieniu wojny*, Policja.pl, <https://gazeta.policja.pl> (31.10.2024).

³⁰ L. Kryvachuk, *Social policy during the war in Ukraine: innovations, migrations, deportation of Ukrainian children. Polityka społeczna w czasie wojny na Ukrainie*, Kraków 2024.

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Narodowa Policja Ukrainy i Policja w Polsce – wyzwania w czasie wojny w Ukrainie – wybrane problemy

Streszczenie

Autorka artykułu omówiła sygnałnie najważniejsze problemy, z którymi zmaga się Narodowa Policja Ukrainy (NPU), działająca w bardzo trudnych warunkach wojennych. Przedstawiła też rolę NPU w podtrzymywaniu państwowości ukraińskiej oraz działania Policji w Polsce wobec zmieniającej się rzeczywistości zewnętrznej i wsparcie tej formacji udzielone NPU w celu doskonalenia jej kompetencji i możliwości. Wyzwania, które z mocy prawa odnoszą się głównie do bezpieczeństwa i porządku publicznego, niezależnie od trwającego konfliktu zbrojnego, są stopniowo umiędzynarodawiane. We współczesnej rzeczywistości widać pilną potrzebę dzielenia się doświadczeniami, ale też danymi, oraz potrzebę intensyfikacji wspólnych działań, zwłaszcza dochodzeniowych i operacyjnych, szczególnie w odniesieniu do zwalczania zorganizowanej przestępczości oraz zagrożeń o charakterze terrorystycznym. Artykuł powstał w wyniku analizy wybranego piśmiennictwa, w tym zasobów internetowych, z uwzględnieniem relacji oraz wywiadów. Zastosowano metodę dedukcji, indukcji oraz syntezę.

Słowa kluczowe: Policja, wojna, przestępczość, zagrożenia bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego