

Report from the XXVI International Scientific Conference *Dispositional groups in the cross-border cooperation system for security* (Wrocław, 7–8 May 2015)

In recent years, in many different disciplines of science there has been an increase in the interest in the broad issue of security. In the context of the emerging transformations, both at the global and local level, there are many research questions, as well as challenges to the sociology of dispositional groups. In addition, the dynamic transformations do not remain without influence on the institutions that create security system, hence the public authorities. One of security principals which exercises its activity within a regional community is a provincial government. The priority tasks of the local authorities to ensure the safety of residents, and therefore, the effectiveness of security assistance and civil protection policy depend on the cooperation of all kinds of business groups operating within the province. However, it should be borne in mind that emerging threats do not arise only inside a country, but they often appear on its border areas or come from the outside. In connection with a new nature of threats to security, there appear, among others, such questions as: How do national borders shape the social life of neighbouring countries? What is happening in the “contact” sphere of socio-economic and cultural diversity? What is the role of business groups in the cross-border cooperation for security? What is the impact which transcivilisational, transnational, transregional, transreligious processes have on safety?

These questions are some of the many issues that have been raised during the XXVI International Scientific Conference titled: *Dispositional groups in the cross-border cooperation system for security*, held on 7–8 May 2015 in Wrocław. The Conference was held under the honorary patronage of the Minister of Interior Mrs Teresa Piotrowska. The organisers of the Conference were: the Marshal of the Lower Silesia district and the Department of Sociology of Dispositional Groups of the Institute of Sociology, the University of Wrocław. The meeting’s co-organisers were the following academic institutions: Police Academy in Szczytno, Department of Sociology of Education of the Institute of Sociology of the University of Wrocław, The General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military Academy of Land Forces in Wrocław and the Polish Sociological Association — Wrocław Department. The media patronage of the Conference included the television TVP WROCLAW, the Military Institute of Publishing, and *Civil Defense Review*. The Conference brought together more than 140 participants representing various organisations and institutions, including: national and international (German, Slovak, Ukrainian, Czech) scientific centres, research, business and representatives of dispositional groups from military, civil and paramilitary security systems. The Conference was divided into five plenary sessions, in addition, on the second day of the Conference, there was also a reporting and electoral meeting of the Sociology National Security Problems Section of the Polish Sociological Association.

The solemn inauguration of the conference was made by Prof. Jan Maciejewski, head of the Department of Sociology of Dispositional Groups at the Institute of Sociology, University of Wrocław. He stressed what an honour it was to have the honorary patronage over the conference by Mrs Teresa Piotrowska, the Minister of Interior. The Professor also stressed that the theme of the periodically organised conferences is a celebration of the formation of the departments and entities responsible for the security and the dis-

positional groups in society. As a result, we should be able to reconstruct and appreciate their contribution to ensuring security. In addition, Prof. Jan Maciejewski stressed that the problems addressed during this conference reflect contemporary social needs which clearly point to the fact that the risks of a natural, technogenic and social nature which can generate conflicts arise not only within states, but they very often also appear in their borderland areas. Then the Professor thanked all the assembled guests for coming and wished them productive discussions that provide accurate thoughts and effective decisions concerning the state security system.

Then the speaker Mrs Agnieszka Sokołowska, the Director of the Department of Defence and Security Office of the Lower Silesian Marshal Office, welcomed guests representing the local authorities and the representatives of business groups and entities guarding the safety of the Lower Silesia. In addition, Mrs. Sokołowska stressed that the issue of the Conference shall become part of the tasks carried out by the Department of Defence and Security of the Lower Silesian Marshal Office which are, inter alia: drafting the plan and organising defence training, as well as coordinating defence and security-related activities. In addition, the Director of the Defence and Security Office thanked the gathered guests for arriving and actively participating in this major scientific event.

The representatives of science and academic centres were represented, among others: by the Rector's authorities of the University of Wrocław, the Vice Rector for Scientific Research and International Cooperation — Prof. Adam Jezierski; the Director of the Institute of Sociology of the University of Wrocław, Prof. Zbigniew Kurcz; in turn, the Rector of the General Milan Rastislav Stefanik Armed Forces Academy was represented by Jozef Matis, PhD; the Rector-Commandant of the General Tadeusz Kościuszko Military Academy of Land Forces was represented by Prof. Janusz Szelka; the Polish Academy of Sciences was represented by: Prof. Antoni Kamiński, Prof. Alexander Manterys and Prof. Andrzej Szpociński. Present at the conference were also: the Rector-Commandant of the National Defence University Prof. Dariusz Kozerawski and Michal Turošik, PhD, representing the Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica.

The two-day Conference was attended by many distinguished scholars from Poland, among others Prof. Janusz Sztumski (University of Silesia in Katowice); Prof. Kazimierz Doktor (University of Łódź); Prof. Marian Cieślarczyk (Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities); Prof. Jerzy Konieczny (Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań); Prof. Grażyna Skąpska (Jagiellonian University in Kraków); Prof. Bogdan Szulc (National Defence University); Prof. Danuta Walczak-Duraj (University of Łódź), Prof. Viktoriya Serzhanova (University of Rzeszów); Prof. Krzysztof Czekał (Pedagogical University of Cracow); and scholars from other universities: Prof. Berthold Löffler (University of Applied Sciences Ravensburg-Weingarten); Tetyana Semeryuk (Zaporizhzhya National Technical University); Valerii Cherneta (Dnepropetrovsk State Finance Academy).

Among the representatives of dispositional groups of military and paramilitary and civil security systems present were: Piotr Łapiński, PhD, representing Jacek Kitliński, the General Director of the Prison Services, captain Janusz Czech and major Rafał Badowski representing the Specialised Center for the Border Guards Training in Lubań; Danuta Bukowiecka, PhD, vice-rector of the Higher School of Police in Szczytno; Artur Fular,

Commandant of the Lower Silesian Regional Volunteer Road Rescue Service; Mirosław Górecki, the President of the Karkonosze Group of the GOPR (Mountain Volunteer Search and Rescue); Sławomir Czubak, Head of the Karkonosze Group of the GOPR; Sebastian Jeziorski representing Volunteer Fire Department Specialist Rescue Group "Old Town"; Wincenty Mazurec, Chief Executive Officer of the Ambulance Service in Wrocław; Wojciech Ołdyński, Commandant of the Provincial Police in Wrocław; general Andrzej Szcześniak, Lower Provincial Commissioner of the PSP in Wrocław; Łukasz Iskrzycki, the President of the Republic of Poland's Water Rescue Department in Wrocław; Krysztyna Zuwała, the Regional Director of the Prison Services in Wrocław; Magdalena Szwczyk-Dzido and Weronika Dzido representing Volunteer Fire Department Specialist Rescue Group Wisznia Mała; Krzysztof Skrzyniarz, President of the Lower Silesian Water Rescue Team in Wrocław; Iwona Dyszkiewicz, Director of the Agricultural Property Agency, Regional Office in Wrocław.

At the conference, there were also present representatives of the local government administration, including: Ewa Mańkowska, Deputy Speaker of the Lower Silesian District; Renata Granowska, Deputy Head of the City Council of Wrocław; Bogusław Szuba, Deputy Director of the Customs Chamber in Wrocław; Tomasz Smolarz, Lower Silesian Governor; Jadwiga Szelağ, Head of the Social Policy, Health and Family Committee of the Lower Silesian Regional Assembly; Zbigniew Szczygieł, Head of the Legislative, Law Obedience and Security Committee of the Lower Silesian Regional Assembly; Czesław Kręcichwost, Head of the Budget and Finances Committee of the Lower Silesian Regional Assembly; Marek Dyduch, Vice-President of the Legislative, Law Obedience and Security Committee of the Lower Silesian Regional Assembly; Dariusz Chmura, the Mayor of Wołów.

During the two-day meeting, several issues were discussed: cross-border cooperation of dispositional groups of military, paramilitary and civil security system; activity of the government administration and local government in the face of the challenges of reality "without borders"; risks and opportunities resulting from transbordering; the role of the dispositional groups of civil security system (GOPR, Mountain Volunteer Search and Rescue), paramilitary (Police, Prison Services), military (Border Guards) in risk prevention in the context of transbordering.

The problems of the conference have been placed in the realities of current social problems. The discussion of participants has indicated a problem concerning transbordering in the context of the provision of security. The conclusions drawn in the course of the two-day deliberations have provided the answers to the questions of both theoretical and practical nature about the role of government in the system of security, based on the example of the Lower Silesian District. They also concerned the effective measures adopted by the groups controlling the security systems in response to cross-border threats. In addition, the adopted conclusions have become the basis for further research projects, as well as exchanging views and sharing research results. The papers presented will be published in the post-conference edited volume *Dispositional groups in the system of transborder cooperation for security*, within the series "Sociology of Dispositional Groups".

*Daria Hofman and Jan Maciejewski*