

Consequences of EU enlargement for terrorism?

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The European Union is an active actor in the field of counterterrorism on the one hand, terrorism is a security threat to the EU and its member countries on the other hand. On the territory of the EU member states various terrorist groupings operate against domestic and foreign countries and societies and the EU itself is a target of terrorist threats and attacks. The EU-enlargements represents a specific challenge for terrorist activities as well as for the EU-counterterrorism. This paper outlines the basic framework of the relation between the EU-enlargement and terrorism/counterterrorism. The concrete impacts of the last EU enlargements on terrorism and the EU-counterterrorism are analyzed.

EU/EC and terrorism/counterterrorism

At least since the end of the 19 century various terrorist activities have been typical of the European area. The European Communities as an institution (later the European Union) have come in interaction with terrorist activities since the beginning of modern European integration process in the 1950s. The first threat was represented by subversive terrorist activities, which were organized by the secret services of the communist states.

An example is the letter bomb attack organized by the Czechoslovak State security (StB) in 1957 against the prefect of Strasbourg Andre Tremaud, which killed his wife. The attack was realized under the name of a false non-existing German neonazi-organization “Fighting unit

for the independent Germany (KFUD)” at the time of a meeting of the European Coal and Steel Community in Strasbourg. The goal of the Czechoslovak communists was weakening of the German-French friendship and European integration, however, this attempt was not successful¹.

The territory of the EC states was since the end of the 1960 confronted with the rise of domestic ideological (right-wing as well as left-wing terrorism) and ethno-territorial terrorism and international secular Middle Eastern terrorism (in connection to diasporas in Europe). This terrorism was oriented mostly against the states, not against the EC as an institution. However, this wave of terrorism caused the start of the counterterrorist activities within the EC in the middle of 1970s (TREV-cooperation).

In the middle of the 1980 an extreme left-wing terrorist transnational organization was established, mostly as an armed opposition against the “NATO-Imperialism” and partially against the militarization of the European integration project. It was the Anti-Imperialist Front (AIF) or the Western European Revolutionary Guerilla Front. The two main member organizations were the German Red Army Faction (RAF) and the French Direct Action (AD)². However, this organization existed for only a short time and the real transnational cooperation with other groups was limited. The aiming against the militarization of Europe was declared in several statements of the AIF and its member organizations³.

The new era of the European counterterrorist policy starts after the Maastricht Treaty. The next impulse for the development of this policy was September 11 2001 and later the attacks and plots on the EU territory (mostly in Madrid 2004 and in London 2005). The main current threat is the global Islamists (or Jihadists) terrorism, however, also other variants of terrorism are threatening the European territory.

The contemporary EU-counterterrorist policy is realized in many fields of European politics. The active EU role in counterterrorism led to the restriction of terrorist activities on the one hand, terrorist groupings are more interested in communication with the EU by violent or non-violent means (for, example, the Kurds demonstration against the enrolling of the PKK to the so called EU-terrorist list) on the other hand.

The EU-member states realize their own counterterrorism policy, including policy outside the EU-framework (a. o. the member countries of the NATO or states are engaged in direct

¹ Miroslav Mareš, *Terorismus v ČR* (Brno: Centrum strategických studií, 2005), p. 119.

² Bernhard Rabert, *Links- und Rechtseterrorismus in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland von 1970 bis heute* (München: Bernard & Graefe Verlag, 1995): 134.

³ Ely Karmon, *Coalitions between Terrorist Organizations. Revolutionaries, Nationalists and Islamists* (Boston, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2005), pp. 160-164.

cooperation with the US counterterrorist activities). However, the threat caused by individual activities of the member states could lead to the threat to the EU as a whole. An example is the attack in Madrid in 2004 because of the Spanish presence in the US-led coalition in Iraq and the following Al-Qaeda statement from April 2004 with the offer of truce for Europe in the case of the end of European cooperation with the USA (and threat in the case of non-acceptance of this offer)⁴.

The terrorist threat towards the EC/EU in relation to the threat to member states could be identified in three basic dimensions:

1. Attacks and threats aimed primarily against the EC/EU member countries and their citizens (without direct presence of the EC/EU elements), on the EU territory or outside this territory;
2. Attacks and threats against the EC/EU against the EC/EU member countries and their citizens (with subsidiary presence of the anti-EC/EU elements in justification of the attack or threat), on the EU territory or outside this territory;
3. Attacks and threats primarily against the EC/EU institutions, officials, symbols or activists of the European integration (due to the EU general policy and/or specialized counterterrorism policy), on the EU territory or outside this territory.

The following table shows examples of the third above mentioned category (attacks primarily against the EC/EU) shows:

General attack/threat against territory and citizens of the member states of the EU with the goal to influence European politics directly	Al-Qaeda truce offer and interconnected threat towards Europe after Madrid bombings 2004.
Attack/threat against the EC/EU target (institution, official etc.) with directly declared identity of the perpetrator with the goal to influence European politics directly	Several assassinations committed by the RAF (as a part of the Anti-Imperialist Front in Western Europe) in the 1980s, a. o. murder of Gerold von Braunmühl in 1986.
Attack/threat against the EC/EU target under false identity, with the goal to set their member countries and allies against each other with the goal to influence European	Attack of the Czechoslovak Security Service in 1957 against the meeting of the ECSC in Strasbourg under the name of false organization “Fighting Unit for Independent

⁴ Christopher M. Blanchard: Al Qaeda, Statements and Evolving Ideology (Washington: Congressional Research Service, 2007), p. 6, <http://italy.usembassy.gov/pdf/other/RL32759.pdf> (accessed 4. 10. 2008).

politics indirectly.	Germany”.
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Terrorist threat against the EU could be divided into domestic and international terrorism. However, the “domestication” of many forms of terrorism is even stronger. The reasons why the terrorist groups with primary origin and goals outside the EU territory are more and more also the domestic problem of the EU are:

- the globalization of terrorism and counterterrorist activities;
- the struggle of terrorist cells in diasporas to engage the EU and its member states in the resolution of the “out of area” conflicts;
- the active EU role in the armed “out of area” conflicts, because the parties of the conflicts operate with terrorist means (or realized logistic activities for terrorism) in the area of the conflict as well as outside this territory (including EU-territory).

EC/EU-Enlargement and terrorism/counterterrorism

The territory of the EC/EU is not stable because of several realized and planned enlargements. In connection with counterterrorism every enlargement is a reason for the widening of the EU-counterterrorism policy and in this sense it is a benefit for the countering terrorism (effective instruments have impact in a larger area and traditional EU countries have new allies). On the other hand, the higher number of member countries could lead to more complicated discussions about the common goals and means of the EU-counterterrorism.

Enlargement is a challenge for the EU-counterterrorism policy (or threat to it) because:

1. The EU is widening to new geopolitical areas, including regions with terrorist potential (1. 1., on the new EU-territory or 1. 2., in neighborhood of the new EU countries). It means that the larger EU produces more forms of terrorism on the EU territory, which could represent also a direct threat to the EU targets (the attacks against the EU targets and supporters of the EU in the candidate countries could be realized even during the accession process);
2. The larger EU (and mostly the larger Schengen area) is a challenge for the strategy of the internationally operated terrorist groups. It also offers a larger area for activities of the terrorist groups from the traditional EU-countries and their logistic background.
3. The enlargement of the EU could be a reason for the violence against the EU-targets for the political forces which opposed such enlargement in the traditional countries (however, this case is not very likely).

The real consequences of the EU-enlargement for terrorism could be demonstrated on the example of the enlargement of the EU to the post-communist area in 2004 (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia) and in 2007 (Bulgaria, Romania). Cyprus as well as Malta are not part of this analysis. Next chapter deals with the assessment of the impact of the future enlargements (which should include contemporary candidate countries - Croatia, Macedonia, Turkey) on European counterterrorism.

The most important questions in this context are:

1. How the EU-enlargement could influence the power and strategy of the internationally operated terrorist groups on the one hand and their countering by the EU on the other hand?
2. Which forms of domestic terrorism in the EU countries or their neighborhood are challenges for the EU counterterrorism policy?
3. How effective is the Europeanization of the counterterrorism policy for the countering of terrorism in the larger European area (in relation to the internationally/globally operated variants of terrorism as well as in relation to the domestic terrorism in traditional and the new EU countries or candidate countries).

EU-Eastern Enlargement 2004/2007 and terrorism/counterterrorism

East and Central Europe has a long time tradition of terrorism. During the cold war the communist regimes supported the Western European extreme left-wing terrorism as well as the Middle Eastern secular Arab terrorism. The global Islamist terrorism could be in the post-communist EU countries connected partially with the legacy of the activities of the Middle Eastern secular terrorist groups, including logistic background, money laundering and organized crime. The organized crime came into this area in 1990s and it is still strong⁵. In this sense the post-communist EU-countries were and are the rear for Islamist actions in other parts of the world, including Western Europe.

The members of traditional Muslim communities and the wave of immigrants from the communist era (mostly members of leftist groups from Islam world) are mostly moderate and without extremist or terrorist tendencies. Only some fanatic missionaries and immigrants from post-communist era tried to radicalize the traditional Muslim community in the post-

⁵ Miroslav Mareš, *Terrorism in Post-communist Europe*, 2008, article offered to the journal *Terrorism and Political Violence* in September 2008.

communist EU-countries⁶. Militant tendencies and organized crime links to terrorism are represented also within small new diasporas, namely in Chechen (in Poland and in the Czech Republic), Bosniak and Albanian diasporas.

The EU-enlargement did not play a significant role for the strategy of global Islamist directly. One possible exception is a case of the GSPC activist in Slovakia. He founded family in Slovakia at the end of the 1990s, then he left it and in 2006 he turned back. There exists suspicion that this case was a part of a strategic building of Islamist-position in the East Central European countries before the EU-Enlargement, however, it is only speculation⁷.

The most significant threats towards the post-communist EU countries are connected with the foreign policy of some of them (outside the EU-policy). It is caused by intensive support of several new EU countries for the US policy, mostly:

- the support for US military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan,
- - a possible support in the case of the CIA secret prisons in Poland and Romania,
- CIA-flights with prisoners,
- support for US military bases in the new EU-countries, recently mostly the planned radar base in the Czech Republic and the interceptor base in Poland, as a part of the US National Ballistic Missile Defense.

Islamist threats were addressed against several post-communist countries⁸, maybe also with the goal to enlarge the gap between “old” and “new” Europe. Several plots were disclosed before as well as after the EU-Enlargement in these countries. Not a single real Islamist terrorist attack on the territory of the new post-communist EU countries has been realized so far.

The potential target of Islamist attack is the Radio Free Europe in Prague (it broadcasts also into Islam world). Also the strong support for Israel (mostly by the Czech Republic) is a topic of Islamist propaganda. The official pro-Israeli policy was in the past the reason for support of Islamist activities by the militant extreme left and by militant extreme right (namely the Czech neonazi group National resistance under German nazi influence). However, the main

⁶ György Lederer, Countering Islamist Radicals in Eastern Europe, in: Anne Aldis/Graeme P. Herd (eds): *The Ideological War on Terror, Worldwide Strategies for Counter Terrorism* (London - New York: Routledge, 2007), pp. 213-227.

⁷ Source of information: Police corps of the Slovak Republic.

⁸ Centrum Studiów i Prognoz Strategicznych, *Zagrożenie atakami terrorystycznymi w Polsce 2006 RAPORT CSiPS* (Łódź, Wyższa Szkoła Studiów Międzynarodowych w Łodzi, 2005), pp. 4-5.
http://www.specops.com.pl/CSiPS/artykuly_CSiPS/RAPORT%20CSiPS%20Zagrozenie%20atakami%20terrorystycznymi%20w%20Polsce%202006%20WERSJA%20PDF.pdf (accessed 10. 8. 2008).

part of the East Central European extreme right is strongly islamophobic (mostly the Christian extreme right)⁹. This could be a reason for violent actions and re-actions in this field.

The organized crime networks of non-Islamist international terrorist groups built in the 1990s are still active, a. o. the networks of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) in Romania and some other countries or the networks of Albanian secular militant groupings. On the other hand, the decline of some terrorist in the West caused the disappearance of their criminal activities in East Central Europe before the EU Enlargement– this is a case of the Northern Ireland terrorist groups.

The EU-Enlargement in 2004 and 2007 moved the EU also to the neighborhood of the Western Balkan (with a complex of terrorist threats¹⁰), to the neighborhood of Russia (also with a complex of terrorist threats), to the neighborhood of Belarus (where small scale anti-regime terrorism exists, however, the authoritarian Lukashenko regime tried to discredit domestic opposition as well as its foreign supporters, mostly Poland, as allies of these anti-regime terrorists)¹¹ and to the neighborhood of Moldova (where terrorist methods are sometimes used in the internal Transdnestria-conflict and Romania is engaged in this conflict indirectly).

Domestic terrorism has a limited potential in the post-communist EU countries. Dangerous are violent activities of the right-wing extremism in the post-communist EU-countries. The members of youth subcultures have realized a high number of racist, anti-Semitic anti-gay/lesbian and anti-leftist violent attacks. However, the use of the term terrorism in relation to such kind of violence is questionable.

The propaganda of the far right includes sometimes the motives of the international neonazi-terrorism, mostly the glorification of the Combat 18. Recently also the celebration of the “Russian way” is typical, in the sense of support of brutal terrorist methods of the Russian right-wing extremism. The young extreme right militants from the post-communist EU countries (mostly Slavonic countries) have a direct connection with the Russian scene.

A phenomenon of Eastern Europe, including the post-communist EU-countries, is the far right paramilitarism. It is closely connected with the territorial disputes and irredentism (Baltic states, where also Russian extreme right groupings operate, Slovenia and Hungary and its neighborhood countries). In several countries far right paramilitary vigilantism against Roma community has played an important role (Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, the Czech

⁹ Miroslav Mareš 2008 (see note 5 above).

¹⁰ Věra Stojarová, *Současné bezpečnostní hrozby západního Balkánu*, (Brno: Centrum pro studium demokracie a kultury, 2007), pp. 97-108.

¹¹ Miroslav Mareš 2008 (see note 5 above).

Republic). It caused also the establishing of the self-defense home guards of Roma people¹². The paramilitary activities could be a base for terrorism, however, since the end of the 1990s it has not been typical.

Domestic ethno-territorial terrorism does not exist (with the exception of the irredentist far right and a limited potential for Roma terrorism, see above). The terrorist letter threats or e-mail threats of the Moravian Liberation Army (MOA) or Silesian Republican Army (SAR) are more a curiosity than real terrorism¹³. The left wing extremism produces mostly non-terrorist violence in relation to antiglobalism and antifascism, not terrorism in the post-communist EU countries. However, sometimes the former European left-wing terrorism is evaluated positively in the extreme left propaganda. The activities of the eco-terrorism (mostly in the form of local branches of the global networks Animal Liberation Front and Earth Liberation Front)¹⁴ are limited. The same can be said about single-issue terrorism (interesting is an attempt to imitate gay/lesbian terrorism in Poland in 2005 with bomb imitations, under the name Gay Power Brigade)¹⁵.

During the accession process as well as after the EU-Eastern enlargement no serious terrorist attacks were realized in the post-communist EU countries. This is valid also for attacks aimed against the EU-target (a possible exception is the sabotage attack against the propaganda train in Estonia during the EU-accession campaign in 2003). The main terrorist threat in relation to this area is connected with the for-US and for-Israeli policy of several states in this area and in this context it is a challenge for the EU-counterterrorism policy. The impact of the EU counterterrorist measures on the security situation in the new EU countries is difficult to evaluate exactly at present, however, the EU measures have been applied in these countries and they contribute to the countering of terrorism.

Terrorism and contemporary candidate countries

Three contemporary candidate countries are an interesting challenge for the EU-counterterrorism. Croatia is a neighbor country of Bosnia-Herzegovina, where Islamist bases were created during the war in the 1990s. In fact, Islamists from Bosnia are active in

¹² Miroslav Mareš/Richard Stojar, *Extreme Right Paramilitary Units in Eastern Europe*, 2008, article offered to the Journal of Contemporary European Studies in March 2008.

¹³ Miroslav Mareš 2008 (see note 5 above).

¹⁴ Miroslav Mareš, Environmental Radicalism and Extremism in Postcommunist Europe, in *Journal for the Study of Radicalism*, 2, No. 1, Spring 2008, pp. 91-107.

¹⁵ Miroslav Mareš, Extreme Left Terrorism in Contemporary Europe: from "Communist Combatant Parties" to Militant Campaigns? *Central European Political Studies Review*, 9, No. 4 (Autumn 2007), pp. 294-314 <http://www.cepsr.com/dwnld/maresx20040404.pdf> (accessed 4. 10. 2008).

contemporary Bosnian communities in the EU and in this context the accession of Croatia does not represent a more intensive threat to the EU.

In Croatia the militant extreme right with terrorist and war traditions and experiences is relatively strong, but a large scale of its terrorist activities is unlikely in the future. A limited terrorist potential is connected with several Serbian militants from Krajina, which claimed violent restoring of Republika Srpska Krajina. They are now living mostly in emigration in Serbia. However, they are active in virtual internet communities now, not in a real fight. A large majority of Serbs from Krajina rejects violence in the current situation¹⁶.

The Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia is threatened by the Albanian terrorist and paramilitary groupings, which struggle for the Great Albania of Great Kosovo and which are engaged in various organized crime activities on the Macedonian territory. The intensive cooperation with the United States could be a reason for anti-Macedonian activities of Islamism – in Western Balkan it has bases mostly in Bosnia, in Sandzak and in Kosovo and Albania. Territorial disputes could cause clashes between Macedonian and Bulgarian nationalists and mostly between Greek and Macedonian nationalists (including patriotic Greek far left militant groups). The use of terrorist methods in such clashes is not excluded.

A large scale of terrorist activities is connected with Turkey – strong Islamist terrorism, left-wing terrorism, right-wing terrorism and separatist Kurdish terrorism. Despite the fact that all these variants of terrorism have been active in Turkish diasporas in the EU countries for a long time, the future Turkish membership in the EU represents an important problem for the EU counterterrorism. Accession of Turkey means for the EU also a move to direct borders with Iran, Iraq, Syria, Georgia and Armenia. A terrorist threat towards the EU is closely connected with the situation in all these countries.

Conclusion

The framework models of interactions between terrorism/counterterrorism and the EU enlargement could be applied also in the research into both the last EU enlargements as well in the research into the future enlargements of the EU. The EU-enlargements in 2004/2007 into the post-communist area represented an important challenge for the terrorist activities as well as for the EU-counterterrorism, however, the terrorist potential in the three new candidate countries will be probably a more intensive problem from the point of view of

¹⁶ Miroslav Mareš/Věra Stojarová, *Republika Srpska Krajina*, 2008, article offered to the Western Balkans Security Observer in October 2008.

threatening of the EU territory by terrorist activities as well as for the EU-counterterrorist capabilities.