SECURITY RISKS AND THREATS - HANDLING, PHENOMENOLOGY, MAPPING -

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Impressum

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Introduction

The script at hand is a result of a pilot research project, presenting some of the preliminary findings on security risks that the Macedonian society and state are facing today.

It represents a first step in creating a model for thorough monitoring and mapping of security risks and threats by the Faculty of Security in Skopje which the authors intend to establish. The text adds to the publications and studies by the Faculty of Security, such as the Security Index 1 and 2 published by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation and the Opinion of Citizens on Security and Security Threats in the Republic of North Macedonia. With the aim to increase the number of published texts on security risks and threats, this time, we decided to carry out a preliminary research on security risks in the Republic of North Macedonia: mapping, etiology, phenomenology and handling security risks. Four years ago, the Faculty of Security carried out a scientific research on the opinion of citizens on security and security threats. The present script complements that study and revisits some of the security risks and threats. Particularly, the text published by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation aims at establishing a scientific approach to clarifying the process of mapping the elements of a risk, i.e., gaining information on identified dangers, on the exposition to potential risk elements, on their vulnerability, as well as on the capacity (resources) of the system to manage crises. This information could be used to prevent and manage potential risks and to cope with evoked consequences.

The first assessment of risks and threats to national security in the Republic of North Macedonia was the Defence Strategy of the Republic of North Macedonia published in 1998. The terms used in that document were "danger" and "source of threat", while the National Conception on Security and Defence as of 2003 referred to the terms "risks and threats to national security". Threats had been assessed for the needs of the defence sector even before those two strategic documents were published, but those assessments were not available to the public. Thenceforth, the Republic of North Macedonia had publicly assessed risks and threats. The Law on Crisis Management as of 2004 defined "risks and dangers" to national security and the term "threats to the security of the Republic". A detailed assessment of risks and threats to national security was published in the Strategic Defence Review (SDR) in 2004.

The first part of the text at hand contains a detailed analysis and explanation of the risks and threats to national security that resulted from the pilot research. Some of them are defined within the above-mentioned strategic documents of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Assuming that we are living in a very risky society with a growing number of increasingly fluid and diverse security risks, we base our study on a contemporary theoretical framework in which today's risks are considered as a societal and security problem. Above all, we were determined to assess whether we encounter the basic features of security risks typical of globalised and postmodern societies in the context of the conditions of today's society and the setup of the state and its security agencies. Today, security risks represent the predominant topic in our discussions on security.

However, we are lacking scientific and research results which would determine the threats from today's types of security risks concerning, above all, the vital interests and the safety of our citizens. While the number of scientific studies on security risks in the Republic of North Macedonia is very low, the existing ones also lack solid theoretical elaboration regarding their subject. In the present study, we refer to the results from the research on the expert community *"The Study of Security Risks in the Republic of North Macedonia"*, which was based on a theoretical study of the different approaches to defining security risks. The study deals with the expert community, i.e. representatives of institutions with direct responsibilities in dealing with security risks and threats.

The fast development of science, technology, new global processes and types of international cooperation has set new standards and values. The fast pace of changes has led to international security – and, as a consequence, national security – being exposed to new types of serious threats. Discussing the dangers and risks of the new millennium, we can state that, today, we are facing fewer risks which were typical of the last century, such as war, aggression, etc. The threats to national security, values and interest are becoming more complex and multiple and less predictable, coming from different directions, which makes them harder to analyse and control. The state community has always been exposed to threats, however, their form and intensity have changed. The severity of the threats of the 21st century lies in the use of the information infrastructure for attacking values. These threats make it impossible to guarantee citizens' life and health, seriously affecting their values and interests. The threats of the new millennium can only be addressed and responded to by means of an internationally devised security policy which the national security policies are based upon.[1]

The aim of the Republic of North Macedonia's security policy is to provide protection and security to its citizens regarding many kinds of external as well as internal influences and threats, including the area of security, economy, politics, environment, culture, etc. The main threats to security are the tensions and antagonisms that result from inter-ethnic conflicts, extreme nationalism, faulty reforms and economic

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1   National security policy is understood as a complex and interdependent system of measures, plans and programmes which the Republic of North Macedonia will undertake for the protection, maintenance and improvement of the state's and its citizens' security in accordance with political, economic, defence, interior, security, social, ecological and other resources.

inefficiency, huge and frequent environmental and/or technological disasters which have a great impact on society. Besides the weak economy and the political, social and ethnic situation, we would like to point out the new types of threats, such as international terrorism, organised crime (human, drugs and arms trafficking, money laundering, illegal migration), militant nationalism, fundamentalism, etc.

These threats can directly or indirectly affect the state and its security, as well as undermine a society's security and its democratic and economic foundations by weakening the state authorities and thus making people loose their trust in the rule of law.

Notwithstanding the authorities' attempts to detect and manage potential threats to the state's security in time, today, we are facing a serious political, economic and security crisis, which is likely to pose a risk to the very existence of the state. Unfortunately, this situation has been lasting for too long, starting from the request of the then opposition for the government to resign, to form a transitional government and to call parliamentary snap elections. The inoperability of the institutions turned out to be a fertile ground for organised crime and corruption, while foreign investments and the economy decreased. Additionally, the migration crisis had a direct impact on the economic, political and security system of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Against this background, and having in mind the pressing issue of research on security risks, the Faculty of Security, being a science and research institution of higher education, trains professionals whose basic task is to detect, prevent and avert risks in time, in order for them not to become larger-scale threats. Based on its professional potential, long-lasting practical experience and scientific and research potential, the main task of the Faculty of Security is to reflect on and analyse societal phenomena, including security risks that can threaten national as well as regional security.

The term and classification of security risks and threats[2]

Security logic consists of some basic elements: *the danger* (which is threatening), *the reference object of security* (which is under threat), *the security protagonist* (which is protecting) and *the means of security* (the way of protection). A danger can appear as a challenge, a risk, or a threat. A challenge is a situation which puts someone or something to a test. That situation does not necessarily need to be dangerous, it can also represent a positive opportunity. E.g., globalisation is a challenge that puts a state, a society or an individual to a test. Societies that have not managed to cope with it may define globalisation processes as a direct threat. A risk represent the possibility of loss, injury, an unfavourable situation or destruction. Unlike challenges, risks cannot have a positive connotation. A risk is measured by means of probability. E.g., in every technologically highly developed society, there is a higher or lower probability, i.e. risk, of technological breakdowns. Environmental disasters are also a type of risk which cannot be eliminated. We can prepare for them and manage the consequences if they occur. A threat can generally be defined as an explicit intention to harm, destroy or punish. The term "threat" has three different meanings (David Baldwin, 1971) In game theory, the basic discipline of strategic studies, a threat is a strategic move with which protagonist A announces that he will pursue certain potentially harmful activities in order to change the behaviour of protagonist B. In social psychology, a threat is B's feeling that A will harm him. According to the third, the relational definition, a threat is a relation between A and B, in which A strives for B to feel threatened and succeeds (David Baldwin, "Thinking about Threats", The Journal of Conflict Resolution, Vol.15, No.1, 1971, pp. 71-78).

Challenges, risks and threats to security can be classified by many different criteria. According to the sector for challenges, risks and threats, they can be military, political, societal, economic or ecological. However, we also have to use other ways to categorise challenges, risks and threats.

With regard to the *origin* of challenges, risks and threats, we can define them as coming from within or from outside a political entity, and thus distinguish between internal and external challenges, risks and threats, respectively.

From a theoretical point of view, the police is responsible for preventing internal challenges, risks and threats, while it is the military which is in charge of external threats to security. However, in times of increasing globalisation, when international borders

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2   Prof. Dr. Marjan Gjurovski, Faculty of Security, Skopje

are called into question creating an "intermestic" space, the number of challenges, risks and threats defined as internal is decreasing. Traditional military challenges, risks and threats are decreasing, too. Between 1993 and 2003, the number of armed conflicts diminished by 40%. Meanwhile, organised crime and terrorism are not only growing, but also taking on increasingly traditional features. It is becoming ever harder to draw a line between internal and external security, and the amount of intermestic issues is growing. Altogether, this leads to an overlapping of the security functions of the different security sector sections, which can be seen from the militarisation of the police and vice versa.

With regard to their source, challenges, risks and threats (henceforth abbreviated as CRT) can be human or environmental. They can stem from protagonists or processes, while protagonists can be state or non-state organisations, as well as terrorist and criminal groups. However, CRT can also stem from processes, such as globalisation, which some consider a challenge. In this case, the transnational companies are not the immediate protagonists of CRT, but the danger as such stems from the very structure and dynamics of global capitalism. With regard to trends of certain periods of time, CRT are often divided into new and old ones. During the Cold War, the nuclear threat was a new type of threat, while the conventional international conflict was an old one. After the Cold War, international conflicts were increasingly considered a traditional threat, while low-intensity disputes, civil wars, terrorism, etc., became the new CRTs.

Depending on the *balance of power* between the security protagonist and the threat protagonist, CRT are also characterised as symmetrical or asymmetrical. In asymmetrical CRT, the weaknesses of the reference object are taken advantage of in order to do greater harm and thus to compensate for a power deficit.[3] With regard to the *time* needed for CRT to come into effect, we distinguish between short-term, medium-term and long-term CRT. Depending on the *degree of harm* that CRT can cause, we talk about low, medium and high intensity CRT.

The classification of threats by Christopher Daase and Oliver Kessler based on empirical and methodological knowledge of the protagonists of security is particularly interesting (Christpher Dasse and Oliver Kessler, "Knowns and Unknowns in the War on Terror: Uncertainty and the Political Construction of Danger", Security Dialogue, Vol. 38, No. 4, December 2007). Daase and Kessler distinguish between four groups of dangers. The first group refers to threats that are well known to the security protagonist, as is how to collect operative data about them. Hence, the threats from the first group are called *known-known threats.* The best example is external armed aggression. All states are relatively familiar with this kind of threat, and they know how to collect relevant

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3   Distinguishing symmetric from asymmetric threats is often called into question because of the insufficient accuracy in the meaning of these terms. See: Stephen Blank, Rethinking Asymmetric Threats, The Strategic Studies Institute, 2003. (http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/ssi/asymetry2.pdf

data. The second group refers to dangers that are much less known, such as terrorism. Even though state authorities dispose of relatively limited empirical knowledge of such threats, they are familiar with some facts and approaches for managing them. Their coming into effect can only be measured by means of probability. States are developing tools for calculating that probability, thus managing those risks. The Department of Homeland Security developed an advisory system with five levels: low risk of terrorist attack (marked green), guarded (marked blue), elevated (marked yellow), high (marked orange), and severe (marked red). Daase and Kessler call these risks *known-unknown risks.* The third group refers to disasters, such as tsunamis or earthquakes, but also to nuclear terrorist attacks, which, alike the risks, cannot be predicted, but on which it is also impossible to collect information pre-emptively. The only way to know anything certain about these disasters is *post festum*, after they have occurred. According to Daase and Kessler, these are the unknown-unknown *disasters*. Finally, the fourth group refers to dangers which are well-known but ignored by the decision-makers, so-called *unknown-known ignorance*. The authors address the example of the 2003 war in Iraq. Notwithstanding all warnings from the entire US Army General Staff as well as a large part of the security community, the political leaders decided to go about the Iraq liberation operation as a conventional conflict in which the American forces would gain a fast and convincing victory.

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Perceptions of threats to security

According to Arnold Wolfers, security does not only mean "the absence of threats to adopted values", but also "the absence of fear that those values will be under threat" (Arnold Wolfers,1952)

We should remember that, at the very beginning of the Roman Empire, the term "security" was mainly used in the psychological context (Latin: securus). It is the subjective feeling of security, rather than an objective state which could even be defined in scientific terms, that vitally impacts our behaviour. Hence, why and in what way are some circumstances considered as challenges, risks or threats to security?[4]

Analysing the material conditions is never sufficient in order to understand why something is perceived as a threat.[5] According to Stephen Walt, the degree of (military) threat is vitally influenced by the aggregated power of a state, i.e. all resources that it has at its disposal (territory, population, economic and technological development, etc.), its geographical proximity, its military offensive capability and offensive intentions (Stephen Walt, 1985). However, experience has shown that assessing whether a state's intentions are offensive or defensive can be rather problematic. It is the essence of the security dilemma, that problem in the relations between sovereign states so hard to solve, that defensive actions of one state can be perceived as offensive actions by another. Often, own actions are considered to have been provoked, while the opponent's actions are interpreted as having been planned beforehand, often with bad intentions.[6] The perception of threats and the reactions to them are often also influenced by the material conditions we have at our disposal. As Robert Kagan has put it: "A man armed with only a knife can be considered a bear sneaking through the woods: a danger that can be tolerated. That is why hunting the bear with a knife is more risky than hiding in the hope that the bear will not attack. A man armed with a gun would probably calculate differently" (Robert Kagan, 2003). However, it is not only the feeling about the level of threat that is subjective, but also the very choice of the reference object of security, as stated by Vojin Dimitrievć. According to him, the elite is always "the first and the most ardent to protect the values close to the class and group they belong to, and they will take advantage of the open definition of national security in order to present their specific values as national ones" (Dimitrijević, Vojin). A subject with less protected

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4   For a detailed overview of security theory, see the Copenhagen school of security studies.
5   The pragmatic approach is solely based on the analysis of material (military) potential, see the neorealism
      of Kenneth Waltz, Theory of International Politics.
6   Psychology has named this the "error of attributing malevolence". See: Roderick M. Kramer,"The Sinister
      Attribution Error: Paranoid cognition and collective distrust in organizations", Motivation and Emotion, Vol.
      18, No. 2, 1994.

values will have stronger feelings with regard to security. Unlike that subject, "a subject that upholds inviolable values and looks with doubt at the surrounding world will feel insecure."

How is the perception of security formed? According to Hans Günter Brauch, the perception depends on the world view of analysts and decision-makers (See: Hans Günter Brauch, "Threats, Challenges, Vulnerabilities and Risks in Environmental and Human Security", Source, No. 1/2005, United Nations University, http://www.ehs.unu.edu/file.php?id=603) which can be *Hobbesian, Grotian or Kantian.*[7] The Hobbesian world view is pessimistic, through the eyes of a gladiator. In a world which follows the rules of the jungle, everybody is everybody's enemy, and power is the only means of survival. Since power, resources and status are limited, nobody can be trusted entirely. Today's friend can become tomorrow's foe. In the Hobbesian view, relations among states represent a zero sum game. Gain on one side means loss on the other. The *Grotian* world view is pragmatic. Survival is possible by cooperation. Relations between states can be mutually beneficial. Other states are not necessarily foes, but rather rivals, in the worst case, and collaborator, in the best. The *Kantian* world view, finally, is idealistic. According to the Kantian view, all states are potential friends that have to work together in order to implement universal values, such as human rights and international law.

The perception of security can depend on the persons who make decisions. (James M. Goldgeier, 1997)[8]. According to psychologist Eric Ericsson, the level of basic trust that a person develops depends on how much attention and love they receive during their early childhood. He claims that basic trust is a precondition for experiencing *ontological security*. If a person feels ontological security, they perceive the social order as a common and predictable world which they have cognitive control upon. They create a "protection capsule", which excludes from their awareness potential risks and threats that could jeopardise them. If the level of basic trust is low, ontological security is easily jeopardised, and the person loses the sense of trust in other people. They can be struck by a paralysing fear of many risks, external chaos, a change that could occur and be experienced like "inner death", according to Lang. Many paranoid dictators who saw threats to their personal security as well as national security everywhere had an unhappy childhood. E.g., Stalin and Saddam Hussein had very strong fathers who left them when they were still children. Meanwhile, a happy childhood and parental love as experienced by Adolf Hitler do not guarantee that the child does not become a paranoid dictator who sees enemies, dangers and threats everywhere.

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7   Brauch bases his division on the English school of international relations. The English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius and the German philosopher Immanuel Kant are often referred to as representatives of the three schools of international relations: realism, liberalism, and idealism.

8   See: James M. Goldgeier, "Philosophy and Security", Security Studies, Vol. 6.

Finally, it is important that increasing objective security does not necessarily lead to a better feeling about security for the individuals. E.g., even though after the Cold War, the number of armed conflicts around the planet began to decrease drastically, the media and experts created an atmosphere in which the opinion that the opposite was happening could spread, which was largely a consequence of Western society becoming a risk society, colonised by fear (Ulrich Beck, 2009). The opposite can also happen: an increasing subjective feeling of security does not necessarily have to lead to an increase in objective security. Governments often adopt security measures that serve the only goal to increase security and peace in the perception of the citizens, while they actually do not decrease the probability of any risk whatsoever. Referring to security at airports, Bruce Schneier calls such measures, whose social, economic and political cost is generally ignored, *security theatre.* (Bruce Schneier, 2003.)

Contemporary challenges, risks and threats to security

Predominant security challenges, risks and threats in the West are changing with time, depending on a variety of factors, the most important ones being technology, psychology, and politics. In the Middle Ages, apart from assaults by foreign military and mercenaries, people were most afraid of the plague, witches, the inquisition, and doomsday (Žan Delimo, 2003). During the 20th century, the importance of traditional military threats did not decrease – on the contrary, they became the main threat. The invention of nuclear weapons capable of destroying all human life on Earth made all other security threats seem insignificant for the first time. After the end of the Cold War, when the danger from a nuclear holocaust faded, the world went back to normality, and people started slightly fearing many things again. Some of those things had been present before, but not at the top, such as terrorism, migration, pandemics and civil wars, others started to intensify, such as climate change, and yet others appeared for the first time in history due to new technologies, such as cyber threats.

States generally try to lay down their security challenges, risks and threats in official documents, such as the national security strategy, the defence strategy, etc. Those documents also contain a list of values, i.e. objects of reference for security, as well as strategies for their protection. Up to the 1980s, those documents were classified (Global book, 1995)[9]. In the USA, the National Security Strategy has been a public document since 1987. It has been revised 11 times (in 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2002 and 2006). The document as of 2006 begins with the words:

"America is at war. This is a wartime national security strategy required by the grave challenge we face – the rise of terrorism fuelled by an aggressive ideology of hatred and murder, fully revealed to the American people on September 11, 2001" (White House, 2006). Are the main challenges the USA are facing, such as terrorism, tyranny, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, as well as threats originating in the process of globalisation, such as pandemics, illegal trafficking and climate change, addressed by this document? On the other side of the Atlantic ocean, the USA's main ally is experiencing fairly different strategic priorities. The European Security Strategy as of 2003 (the first document of this type at EU level) starts off with an entirely different assessment: Europe has never been as advanced, secure and free.

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9   Even the classical Chinese war strategist from the 6th century before Christ Sun-Cu was warning that it is not recommendable to announce the security strategy since in this way one wont be capable of surprise the enemy. See: Sun Cu, Umece Ratovanja, Global Book, Novi Sad, 1995.

The violence in the first half of the 20th century has given way to peace and stability unprecedented in the history of Europe.

Unlike the USA, which experiences the world in a Hobbesian way, as an arena for gladiators, a jungle in which numerous dangerous enemies are lying in ambush, Europe adheres to Kantian ideals, which have led it into a "postmodern paradise". Due to these different perceptions, Robert Kagan has ironically stated that the USA and Europe are living on two different planets: the USA on Mars, and Europe on Venus (Robert Kejgan, 2003). However, besides the differences in their Weltanschauung, we can easily see that the USA and Europe are not living in so drastically different worlds. Thus, the European Security Strategy lists five basic threats to the EU's security: terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, regional conflicts, failed states, and organised crime.[10]

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10 Bezbedna evropa u boljem svetu: evropska strategija bezbednosti, ISAC fond, Beograd, 2006. In the implementation report as of 2008, piracy and energy security were added to the list.

Mapping of challenges, risks and threats to security

The risks and dangers to security in the Republic of North Macedonia are: potential manifestations of extreme nationalism, racial and religious intolerance, phenomena and activities related to international terrorism, organised crime, illegal migration, human trafficking, trafficking in drugs, weapons and dual use goods and technologies, consequences of using weapons of mass destruction, possessing large amounts of illegal weapons, transitional problems such as corruption, urban terrorism, felonies such as blackmail, extortion, homicide, robbery, economic crimes, tax evasion, underdeveloped democratic institutions, dysfunctional judiciary, social issues, unemployment, activities of foreign intelligence services to deteriorate the security situation and slow down processes of democratisation and integration into NATO and EU, consequences of conflicts of interest regarding the use of strategic energy sources and power lines, hampering and blocking energy exports, environmental and other disasters, technical and technological disasters, contagious diseases of humans and animals evoked by internal or external factors, cybercrime, piracy, misuse of information technology, especially concerning citizen's personal data, business secrets and state secrets, environmental degradation and destruction (Mojanoski Cane, Domovski Zlate, Gjurovski Marjan, Ilijevski Ice (2015).

Furthermore, we could add the inadequate system of secondary and tertiary education that trains professionals that do not fit business requirements, a system that produces many (formally) highly qualified professionals which can be considered a "social time bomb" on the labour market.

The constant strategic goal of the Republic of North Macedonia is NATO and EU membership, in order to improve and consolidate security and minimise threats and risks. Now that the name dispute with Greece has been solved by signing the Prespa Agreement, and also the Treaty on Friendship, Good Neighbourly Relations and Cooperation with Bulgaria has been signed, from a political point of view, the Republic of North Macedonia's bilateral issues with its neighbours are settled. Thereby, the conditions for deblocking the EU and NATO integration of the state have been established, Macedonian statehood is recognised, a new framework for building and developing neighbourly relations has been set up, and new prospects regarding infrastructural, energetic, economic and cultural integration have been opened. The Republic of North Macedonia positions itself as belonging to the NATO and EU sphere, and as a constructive partner in solving unsettled issues with neighbours, thus contributing to a decrease of tension and to the stabilisation of the region. As a NATO member, the

Republic of North Macedonia will be a stronger security partner, as cooperation on migration, religious radicalism the in struggle against terrorism will improve. The direct neighbours of North Macedonia are already NATO and/or EU members, which has significant impact on its national security. Regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations have a positive impact on regional security. Nevertheless, the Western Balkans is still facing unsettled political and historical issues which have the potential to provoke instability. The great powers' clash of interest has international, regional and national impact, with a potential to cause instability, crises and threats to the security of North Macedonia. The regional processes are particularly interesting, with features such as political instability, the permanent state of an electoral campaign, strong populism, citizen and social discontent, religious and ethnic intolerance, rising nationalist rhetoric, and cooling bilateral relations.

On the other hand, dynamic changes are taking place at a global and regional level, and power is redistributed. The EU is facing the final phase of Brexit, and right-wing and populist movements are gaining momentum in the member states, which could lead to significant alterations in the Union's political profile in the medium and long run. Security issues directly caused by the migration crisis represent an additional challenge, with radical change to Europe's religious and cultural landscape taking place, but also direct threats such as terrorism and religious radicalism arising.

The conflicts in the Middle East (Iraq, Syria), South Asia (Afghanistan) and North Africa (Libya) have a direct impact on security, caused by the return of foreign fighters and the transit of migrants and extremists. The Republic of North Macedonia is vulnerable to subversive actions by state and non-state protagonists. The greatest threat to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state lies in potential provocation of the still fragile inter-ethnic relations by feigning a conflict situation. The risk of escalating inter-ethnic disputes is directly linked to the state's capacity to overcome internal conflicts and respond to external destructive influence.

The risk of a direct conventional threat to the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity and the unitary character of the Republic of North Macedonia is very small. The threat from non-state protagonists who, independently or supported by state stakeholders, create opportunities for realising political goals is greater. The state is still vulnerable to planned (contract) armed incidents aimed at provoking a major operation by the security forces. Although different types of groups could be behind such incidents (criminals, contract killers, terrorists, returnees, extremists, rebels), their motivation is expected to be financial, and ideology only be used as a political tool. If such incidents are not fought fast and efficiently, the risk of an escalation leading to a broader crisis is high, and then, the ideological background would become more important. The worst scenario would mean crossing the line of mutual tolerance and bringing about an armed ethnic conflict.

Because of its commitment to EU and NATO integration and in the context of NATO enlargement, the Republic of North Macedonia is one of the operational targets in the framework of the great powers' clash of interests. After the new government came into power and while the Prespa Agreement was politically implemented, especially during the time of the referendum, the Republic of North Macedonia was a target for hybrid threats, with a huge wave of disinformation. Propaganda was used, fake news was spread, and by means of provocation and disinformation, the atmosphere of crisis and danger was created. The goal of this informational operation was to have an impact on the citizens' consciousness over social networks, media, NGOs, politicians, clerics, well-known persons, marginal groups, etc. Now that the Republic of North Macedonia is moving forward on its path to NATO and the EU, we must expect even more aggressive hybrid activities, aiming at provoking intra- and inter-ethnic polarisation which can easily be taken advantage of for creating tension and triggering incidents.

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Migration flows

Criminal networks of human smugglers are well organised and have a clear hierarchical structure, they are flexible and adapt fast. Their members come from different states and are positioned along the route. The smugglers manage logistics for the transport of migrants using different means (passenger cars, trucks, trains, rubber boats, motor boats, ships, air transport, going on foot), depending on geographical, temporal, territorial and security conditions.

The multinational smugglers organise the migrants' transport from Turkey to their destinations in EU member states (mainly Germany). In the countries along the routes, helpers play less important roles in the criminal networks, being mostly involved in logistics, such as housing and transferring the migrants. The smuggler networks coordinate all activities of the local contractors: receiving the migrants in transit countries, organising transport vehicles, finding temporary shelter, monitoring bank transactions, etc.

Besides general features, the groups of smugglers are organised according to ethnic and/or religious affiliation. They tend to organise transfers for their compatriots as a priority, due to speaking the same language, having more trust with regard to the transfer of money necessary for the journey, religious relations etc.

Security aspects of illegal migration

The greatest challenges for the countries along the "Balkan route" were and still are the following security risks:

› infiltration of the migrants by terrorists;
› continuous flow of migrants along the route due to the activities of smuggler networks;
› increase of existing forms as well as establishment of new forms of criminal actions (fraud, blackmail, extortion, robbery, human trafficking, organ trafficking, child trafficking, prostitution, trafficking in drugs and weapons, etc.);
› intensified interaction with local criminal structures of different ethnicities;
› enlargement and establishment of new smuggling routes;
› aggravation of the security and financial situation of the countries along the "East Mediterranean route";
› increase of corruption and abuse of office in order to facilitate the journey of the migrants

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Violent extremism, radicalism and terrorism

International terrorism is a security problem and a complex phenomenon which unites a variety of factors and poses a global threat. Radicalism and violent extremism are similar, however not identical terms, often referred to as the basis of terrorism, though impossible to isolate. All the components that define terrorism have a negative impact on national, regional and global security.

It is not only terrorism itself which is rapidly changing shape, but also its concrete and clear goals with their global dimensions. Contemporary terrorism found its most dramatic expression in the attacks of 11 September 2001, being one of the crucial security issues and challenges to global society today. Terrorist acts are becoming more frequent, destructive and deadly, making terrorism the predominant threat to security. However, the roots of terrorism reach far further back than today's Islamic extremism, which was fairly unheard of until the beginning of the 21st century. Even though terrorism dates back to antiquity, not much attention was paid to this social phenomenon until the 21st century. The European states neglected the events in the Near East for a long time, until the threat to Europe increased in 2011 after the events of the so-called Arab Spring. The main threat to Europe actually appeared with "Al-Qaeda" and so-called domestic terrorism.

One of the main differences between the terrorism of the last two centuries and today's global terrorism is that it is not only militant groups that strive to realise political goals, but, in some countries, legitimate political organisations (e.g., the Muslim Brotherhood, the Palestinian Hamas, the Lebanese Hezbollah, the Irish Republican Army, the Kurdish extremists in Iraq and Turkey), i.e. organisations with terrorist as well as political branches. Unlike other terrorist groups, these organisations enjoy strong support from their voters and constantly receive new recruits. Thus, they are legitimately financed by business investments and various kinds of donations and sponsoring. However, most terrorist organisations today are financed from illegal sources, such as money laundering, drug trafficking and dealing, credit fraud, etc. It is rather paradox that these organisations present themselves as idealistic during their establishment, especially when recruiting supporters, but later, when they need to be financed and maintained, they team up with organised crime.

Global challenges

In order to discuss terrorism's reasons and forms of appearance as a global phenomenon, we should first describe globalisation and how it is linked to terrorism. Globalisation encompasses three processes: first, today's globalisation, which has led to a dramatical increase of national and worldwide economic and social inequality, second, the impact of globalisation on those who least benefit from it, and third, its disproportionally huge political and cultural impact (while the scale of globalisation may be modest, except for a small number of European countries). Hence, migration is the main problem in most western developed economies, although no more than 3% of the world's population live outside their country of birth.

The reasons and conditions of international terrorism, religious radicalism and violent extremism depend on the region, country, time and circumstances. The expansion of these global phenomena is mainly due to economic, social, religious, political, ideological and educational factors, a high level of corruption, as well as the non-democratic regimes in the Arab states, etc.

The economic factor is one of the strongest. In circumstances of extreme poverty, dissatisfaction is expressed by different means (protests, disobedience, and destructive actions). An unstable and unfavourable socio-economic situation, unemployment and low wages cause young people to look for a better life, so that they leave for foreign countries. In the mosques, many of them meet radicalised individuals who then influence their mental transformation, inspired by the new forms and practices of Islam. The wish and possibility to gain money and thus power and security is also part of this process.

Social factors are often linked to the system in the state of origin, depending on the setup of the structures within society and relations between the different societal strata in the region or state. The members that extremist and terrorist groups and organisation recruit often originate from economically unstable families, have been marginalised by society, and are thus easy to persuade of any goals whatsoever. Even though we cannot determine a typology of terrorists, some experts claim that, as a rule, the well educated ideologists indoctrinate, recruit and radicalise, while the ones who carry out terrorist activities originate from poor families and are not well educated.

The high corruption level, especially concerning governments, and the lengthy EU integration process are central reasons of dissatisfaction, which many Islamist

leaders take advantage of in order to gain support and incite anti-western and anti-government sentiments among their followers. A lack of preventive measures can lead to religious radicalism becoming one of the most serious threats in the region.

Religious factors include different points of view and beliefs, leading to opposite interests. In the struggle against non-believers, using religion with a political agenda and in the fight against non-democratic regimes, social and political lines are crossed, violence increases and chances for negotiations decrease.

Ideological factors refer to political and other kinds of thought and belief which are in extreme opposition to the generally accepted ideology of living and working within the state. The ideological and religious motives are stressed during the time of indoctrination and recruitment. Fundamentalist motivation messages are usually not openly communicated in the mosques or other places of prayer, but before and after praying, in small dispersed groups, whose true intentions are often hard to disclose and prove. In any case, extended exposure to such messages and speech can lead to radicalisation.

Another factor is the psychological profile: the feeling of discrimination, difficulties to cope, marginalisation etc. can make a person prone to dissatisfaction with Europe and the West and radicalisation, directing them towards joining an extremist or terrorist organisation. At the same time, persons (converted to Islam) who share the ideas are prone to radicalisation and the feeling that the jihad is a "natural" option for Muslims.

Geopolitical factors are tightly linked to national interests and minority groups in some geographical regions.

Global security phenomena

The destructive power of terrorism, religious radicalism and violent extremism has many faces. Terrorism appears in conventional and non-conventional forms. Today, the various forms of conventional terrorism are dominant (suicide attacks, activating explosives, kidnapping, killings, etc.). Non-conventional terrorism refers to non-armed political violence, a very complex form which is hard to discern for security institutions. Non-conventional terrorism is applied using psychological and propaganda measures, different kinds of information, social media (the internet), but also as a tool for radicalisation, financing, etc.

Such forms of terrorism evoke people's fear, which can lead to disobedience and motivate individuals to radicalise. These individuals can form terrorist groups and organisations, which in turn are used to fulfil the political, ideological, religious, social and economic goals of certain states, thus resulting in conventional forms of terrorism. Examples are attempts at overturning legally elected secular governments whose ideology is based on pan-Arabism, illegally elected regimes, as well as, generally, the creation of religious radicalism and violent extremism which lead to terrorism. With regard to the strategic level, religious radicalism is spreading by means of forced expansion of extremist religious doctrine, faulty interpretation of Islam to justify the use of violence, transformation of terrorist groups and structures, improving the cooperation between terrorist groups and organised crime networks, improving terrorist organisations' use of the internet and new communication technologies, infiltration of Islamic communities, and radicalisation at a very young age.

Religious radicalism manifests itself as an intolerant and totalitarian interpretation of Islam, based on a global Islamic state with Islamic law (shari'ah) as the sole religious and political system. The final aim of religious extremists is "to unite the mosque and the state under Islamic law".

The systematic misuse of religion began when Islamic extremists involved in conflicts in foreign countries started justifying their violence with religious arguments. In their efforts to justify violence, they resorted to ideologies, especially religious doctrines. All cases are characterised by a faulty interpretation of religion in order to legitimise violence, a dominant strategy among today's terrorist organisations.

The political ideology of those extremist groups is political Islam. The promoters of political Islam believe that it is a religious doctrine with clear arguments for a political and social order in the modern Muslim world, well prepared and with an implementation agenda. Religious radicalism is basically oriented at searching and

interpreting the Muslims' roots, often limited to Muslim communities, internal, and non-expansive. However, a political dimension is added when the radical ideas are transformed into political agendas of groups whose aim is to fight for power.

During the last years, there have been attempts, mainly by non-state protagonists, to utilise religion for their (geo)political interests in the Balkan region. Religious radicalism was provided with a strong fundament thanks to the financial power of the Islamic countries, raising concern about activities within the broad Muslim community, new and formerly unknown religious customs and practices, dangerous ideals about political Islam, etc.

The impact of religion has become a security challenge in the Balkans due to the risk of transformation or polarisation of the society (disintegration of societal norms and values), stigmatisation of certain communities, creating antagonisms between different religious communities, and the possibility of manipulation by external factors to create instability in the region.

The problem with religious extremism is mainly imported from the Middle East. In the Balkans, it has found fruitful ground, jeopardising regional stability. Thus, cooperation remains the only way to reach tangible results in the fight against religious radicalism. The necessity for the region to be stable and secure has become even more pressing, now that the Balkans, like all other European countries, are facing a set of challenges to security. The USA's requirement that all foreign fighters who took part in the conflicts in Syria and Iraq return home will become another pressing issue, given that those war-experienced persons are extremely fanatic and dangerous, threatening to import their experience and radical ideas into their home countries, thus further worsening the threat of religious radicalism.

Besides the socio-economic factors and the war experience from the Near East, the impact of Islamic radicalism has also been motivated and inspired by some measures and actions of and in European countries that Muslims consider offending and biased. Right-wing extremism, increasingly visibly in France, the Netherlands and Austria, and the alienation and division among the Muslim communities are factors of motivation for further radicalisation. On European grounds, we are witnessing an open conflict between the liberal achievements of European democracy and the conservative attitudes of Muslims who do not accept European values, but adhere to their own. This conflict has created favourable conditions for populist parties who claim that national, religious and ethical values are threatened by Muslim immigrants.

Religious radicalism can also be observed in the behaviour of mainly young Muslims who are becoming more and more conservative and who address not only imams as their spiritual and intellectual leaders, but also close friends and family members. In the future, women could play a key role in this process, as mothers and

wives of jihadists fighting in crisis zones and returning combatants, in educating and indoctrinating future generations of jihadists.

The increase of religious radicalism in North Macedonia and the rest of Europe and the impact of religious life, i.e. the interpretation of Islam as introduction of Islamic law, are results of many years of activities and lack of control over the presence of the Arab countries, non-governmental organisations, and radical spiritual leaders and imams educated in the Arab countries. They have been promoting radical ideas in the Balkan region for more than a decade without hindrance, mostly on religious grounds, in addition to the bad socio-economic situation. Taking advantage of the fundamental human right to religious freedom (whose true nature is hard to disclose and to prove), they are still not hindered in their activities, whereas security agencies are limited in their actions. Even though various successful operations have been carried out (identifying, isolating and arresting imams), the continuing adamant religious doctrine and ways to establish support among smaller communities in the affected countries remain pressing issues.

A crucial role in the process of radicalisation is played by NGOs and Islamic organisations who most often appear in a negative context. Such organisations significantly contribute to spreading, canalising and financing radicalism. Although they are monitored, no appropriate mechanisms have been found yet to restrict their activities.

Another important role is played by mosques that are controlled by radicals (beyond the control of the official Islamic community) and other places that "produce" militant Islamists which serve as meeting and socialisation points for Muslims.

Local communities, families and friends can also be radicalisation factors and support the process. On the other hand, they can also help to stop the radicalisation (preventive measures and actions by the state).

Technological progress is another factor of the shift and development of terrorism, with the internet serving as a tool of utmost importance for global terrorism. Over the internet, terrorists and their supporters can communicate effectively in different forums and chat rooms, where motivation and recruitment are easily managed. During the last years, extremists' and terrorists' messages have spread throughout the world wide web, which has been the subject of many debates and discussions.

Since these phenomena are so dangerous, the security institutions should undertake broader actions and develop appropriate programmes that include all relevant stakeholders, especially proactive protection methods (controlling the situation instead of reacting to accomplished facts) and prevention of the first phases of radicalisation of children, since the extremist propaganda is increasingly targeted at them.

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Security risks

International terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism represent a security risk to the Balkan region for a number of reasons:

› pro-jihadist religious extremist structures (individuals and hidden groups) will continue to pose a general threat to the region, acting as logistic and material support for the global jihadist movement and the network of fighters who return from the conflict zones;

› new infrastructure and better networks for recruiting stronger membership, allegedly striving for "true Islam";

› in Europe, radical Islamists will raise their voice to require the "right to religious affiliation and freedom", "human rights and freedoms", employing numerous citizens' associations to work on their agenda and applying all forms of social action in order for western countries to accept their existence as a fact;

› radical Islamists will continue to exert pressure on their fellow citizens, moderate Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to convert "voluntarily" and thus increase their number, whereas they will especially concentrate on young migrants, an easy target for further radicalisation due to cultural problems in addition to the economic ones, but also western youngsters, offering them the feeling of belonging and community;

› religious leaders, teachers and preachers will continue to promote radical ideologies, whereas they will strive to escape security control and act in secrecy, targeting selected persons prone to manipulation who can also be used for logistics, as facilitators, or to carry out future terrorist activities;

› the risk of establishing occupied territories in so-called free zones where the severe rules of shari'ah are followed and people lead a radical Salafist way of life and which the state institutions and local security agencies can hardly or not at all control (e.g. in Bosnia and Herzegovina);

› the danger that some political structures and members of state and security agencies interact with radical Islamists, a strategy targeted at creating conditions for the long-term establishment of radical structures within the state institutions and exercising influence on politics (introduction of Islamic law).With regard to the latter, in the long run, Islamic radicals could "adapt" their religious extremism and direct their activities at being involved in the institutions, establishing themselves within the western democratic systems by employing political forms of action. Although this option seems incompatible with a radical interpretation of Islam which abnegates democracy and regards the caliphate as the only form of governing, examples of this kind of political action can be found in the Islamic countries.

In the Balkans, Islamic radicalism will continue to grow and to interconnect. It will find ways of strengthening and imposing itself upon the Muslim population, first of all by "silently" taking over the official functions within the Islamic Community, up to the moment when it becomes the "model of true Islam" which all other Muslims have to follow, to the detriment of moderate Islam. Accordingly, we have to expect that Islam will change, that it will not be traditional Balkan Islam anymore. We also should not exclude the possibility that the "superpowers" will try to influence the Balkans, that they will pursue their interests and attempt to dominate the Balkans or certain countries, which, again, will "heat up" religious radicalism and benefit such an agenda.

Organised crime

Today, the number of offences with a transnational dimension committed by organised crime is increasing. Hence, the international community has an interest in preventing all types of organised crime at a global level. Defining organised crime is the first and probably the most important step on the way to establishing a prevention strategy. In the broadest sense, organised crime describes a group of persons who have agreed on committing crimes together. An important element of this definition is that action is coordinated among a group of people. In a stricter sense, organised crime refers to offences committed by a criminal organisation (a gang, group or criminal association) with a hierarchic structure, realised by an organiser and at least to more members.

Professional criminals are ever more often organised in different groups, gangs and other kinds of associations who cooperate in the process of committing crimes as their regular occupation. In such constellations, they often connect to officials responsible for implementing laws, which provides them with a huge advantage compared to criminals who do not enjoy such protection. Thus, organised crime developed as a special form of professional crime.

Criminal organisations can be distinguished according to various criteria: their tradition and the time of their existence, their character and origin, area of interest, level of organisation, etc.

Well organised groups of criminals who have been working together for years according to their own norms often have a solid hierarchic structure of organisation that allows them broad operability in their action. Such organisations are led by a boss who directs the actions and activities.

He can be linked to two or more such organisations. All activity is based on strict discipline, obedience and personal loyalty, all the more if the group is strictly organised and integrated.

These organisations usually have a broad radius of activity, are highly operative and can rapidly manoeuvre and broadly relocate their activities, which is why their societal dangerousness is so sought after.

Criminal organisations make use of all means at their disposal: bribery, threatening, menacing, political connections, only to reach their goals and to thwart the

impact of the laws. They often agree and coordinate actions among themselves, but can also be at war against each other, which sometimes leads to killings.

The general scope of action of organised crime is very wide, while the organisations themselves tend to have narrow specialisations. Some specialise in organising prostitution, others smuggle intoxicants, organise contract killings or blackmail, etc. Organised crime does whatever offers the possibility to gain money, like smuggling, prostitution, bribery, gambling, drug trafficking (heroine, cocaine, marijuana), arms smuggling, recruiting contract killers, carrying out terrorist actions, etc., but also crimes like organised art theft.

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Threats from organised crime

Today's organised crime is becoming more and more international, which allows it to influence the security and stability of states from outside. The organised crime of the 21st century is characterised by the following features:

› networking among criminal groups within state borders, i.e. criminal cooperation;
› internationalisation of criminal activities (from national to international level);
› partnerships between criminal groups and networks from different countries, i.e. internationalisation of criminal cooperation;
› creation of transnational illegal markets of organised crime, i.e. globalisation of the criminal market;
› increasing destructiveness with regard to values and interests of individuals, society, states, and the international community.

Apart from a wider geographical scope, the former narrow specialisation on separate types of crime has now given way to so-called criminal corporations which represent different criminal groups who carry out different types of crimes. The criminal corporations offer "different illegal services in one place", like a "one-stop shop".

There are numerous types of organised crime. The main types are economic and corporate crimes, the drug mafia, arms smuggling, human trafficking, smuggling of migrants, the sex mafia (prostitution and pornography), the car mafia, art and antique theft and smuggle, the gambling mafia, the urban and building mafia, the organ mafia, the baby mafia, the pharmaceutical mafia, the funeral mafia, counterfeiting of money and bonds, extortion, robbery, crime within the military structures, the education mafia, the road mafia, the bankruptcy mafia, the customs mafia, the tobacco mafia, the oil mafia, the energy mafia, the waste mafia, etc. Since organised crime has infiltrated almost all spheres of society, it is realistic to expect the "development of new criminal businesses".

The regional situation

Organised crime has a long history on the Balkan peninsula. It contributed to crushing the state structures in different parts of former Yugoslavia, in different ways that have not been sufficiently cleared up to date. At certain times, the underground cooperated with political elites in order to destroy the foundation of the very state. Abuse of office with criminal aims and political motives included murders of political adversaries, government ministers and renowned dissidents, kidnappings of well-known persons and similar crimes, in which the security agencies of the then republics were involved, all for the sake of so-called patriotism.

By means of cooperation with the political elites, the Balkan organised crime penetrated state structures, thus improved its strategic positions and gradually took control over certain parts of the state apparatus, first and foremost the repressive structures, thus paving its way to long-term political and actual influence on society.

With regard to drug trafficking, there cannot be a so-called Columbian scenario in the Balkans, since it is not an initial but rather a transit region for drugs on the route from the Near East to Europe. Marijuana, however, is produced in Albania and transported everywhere via the Balkan region. In the last few years, via European ports, more and more cocaine from Latin America has been ending up in the Balkans.

Serious criminal organisations engaged in human trafficking, killings, cigarettes, antiques and money laundering, but also in activities in the area of politics, media, and public life have been disclosed in the Balkans. Investments and transfers of illegally gained money in real estate, casinos and banks (money laundering) have been registered, as well as the transport of cash money in cars. Criminal clans have been noticed to be linked to persons from politics and the security structures, especially.

The Balkan criminal organisations strive to legalise the profit from their illegal activities (money laundering) by feeding it into the legal financial system of the region.

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Today's organised crime

Unlike former times, when organised crime was primarily interested in gaining profit, today's criminals have other aspirations, too. Financial power and positions in the political, economical and local sector are being used for exercising non-institutional, non-legal, unethical and other influence on the state, i.e. in order to achieve a good position and status within society, as it cannot be achieved by participating in the regular democratic processes. The connections between organised crime and the political and business elite, but also new centres of financial power (so-called tycoons) are noticeable, resulting in certain types of political, economic and environmental crimes. Such connections are used for legalising illegally gained profit, which makes it necessary to have contacts at all levels of power (government, ministries, police, judiciary, prosecutor, business structures), which help criminal groups in return for money.

Hence, it is clear that organised crime strives to infiltrate the political system of many countries, by means of financing election campaigns, corruption, or intimidation of the voters and political parties. Thus, economic power is transferred into political power, and the achieved political position can be used for increasing economic power, while the dirty capital gets laundered and grows.

It has been noted that organised crime uses media to carry out destructive psychological and propaganda activities (radio, television, social networks). They found, finance and control those media in different ways, thus exerting a certain pressure on the public opinion, as well as the legislative, the executive and the judiciary power as well as to rival criminal groups and organizations or potential witnesses.

Organised crime is particularly destructive regarding business and finance security. The capital of some criminal organisations is larger than the national budgets of several states together, which allows them to contribute to hindering the transition to democracy, restricting personal rights and freedoms, hampering open economy and legal foreign investments, restricting the freedom of choice and press freedom, and financially threatening countries.

Organised crime is also often linked to terrorism. Although, according to a thesis, terrorism is one type of organised crime, their connection should rather be described as relatedness than as congruence.

Impacts of organised crime on citizens and national security

There are at least three dimensions of organised crime's negative impact:

› the human dimension: violating the human rights of direct and indirect victims of organised crime;
› the economic dimension: impacts of organised crime that worsen the unfavourable factors of economic transition;
› the security dimension: threats to national security, slowing down the democratisation process.

In the area of foreign policy, organised crime can indirectly provoke disintegration by hampering and making impossible the integration of the state into international institutions and organisation, which, in turn, can lead to sanctions and interventions by the international community, due to the incapability of the government to stand up against organised crime.

The effects of organised crime on internal policy are highly complex and latent, representing a strategic risk to the security of the state. Possible effects are:

› destabilisation of the economy and the legal markets;
› threats to the operability of some state portfolios;
› networks of organised and other types of crime, most often political crime;
› infiltration of the political system by organised crime;
› economic destabilisation of the state due to money laundering and tax avoidance;
› less influx of funds into the state budget;
› demographic destabilisation due to degradation of the environment and disruption of the economic and social security of families;
› increased racism and xenophobia;
› increased corruption in the public sector;
› destabilisation of the family as the basic entity of society; etc.

Organised crime represents the most severe danger to security. Like terrorism and corruption, it is a complex phenomenon, present in all phases of a society's development. It makes the progress of society impossible, creates distrust of citizens towards the state and its institutions, blocks reforms, causes financial harm, destroys the economy, etc. Hence, it is indispensable to fight organised crime with all means that the state and democratic society have at their disposal. Activities need to be planned, organised and based on realistic premises, as well as agreed on by all state institutions and political stakeholders.

While organised crime was developing and becoming international towards the end of the 20th century, the security systems of many states were not able to react appropriately. When the special services for the fight against organised crime were established, irreversible damage had already been done. Hence, reforms of the security sector have to be continued. Back then, groups of organised crime took advantage of the situation and infiltrated all levels of society. Relations with representatives of political and economic power were particularly destructive. Networks of criminal groups on a national level and partnerships with groups from other countries followed, resulting in the creation of transnational illegal markets of organised crime. A preventive measure in the fight against organised crime is the seizure of illegally gained profit, with the aim to make organised crime and corruption useless. This measure is targeted at the very peak of the criminal pyramid.

Meanwhile, we have to bear in mind that today's organised crime is tightly linked to different types of international crime, mainly economic and financial crime, as well as illegal production and trafficking in drugs, weapons and other dangerous materials, human trafficking, money laundering, and financing international terrorism. In close relation to corruption, new types of highly profitable organised crime are developing, such as cybercrime and trafficking in hazardous waste, one of the most dangerous types of environmental crime.

Research on security risks in the Republic of North Macedonia[11]

Today, we are living in a world of globalised, postmodern societies. The times of linear development dynamics are over. Instead, we are witnessing ambivalent processes, such as the paradigm change concerning security and freedom as core values, which might even be key. Conditions within societies create an atmosphere and culture of life in which people strive to maximise their freedom, and the realisation of individual liberty is seen as a social, cultural and societal achievement.

Nevertheless, in times of globalisation, the complex network of social relations and interdependence, which has greatly contributed to the breakthrough of freedom, has at the same time led to a security boost, in particular to a worriedness concerning security risks. The latter have become, so to say, the basic research paradigm of security studies, which is due to the following factors:

1. Today, security risks dominate risk theory and practice, and the understanding and definition of risks is shifting from neutral to negative (linked to security).

2. Security risks can all the rarer be locally determined. Instead, we are dealing with consequences of complex interdependent relations in a globalised society in which risks are becoming increasingly unpredictable, growing in number, and their potential effects are becoming more severe.

3. Security risks are closely linked to prevention, which is the main response to the new extent and structure of today's security risks.

4. Strategies and ways of coping with, managing and assessing security risks have become the basis for the modern way to handle security risks.

5. The change of the very structure and the types of security risks has become obvious. External security risks are becoming more frequent than internal security risks.

The Republic of North Macedonia does not and cannot remain unaffected by this complex network of social and socialised relations, within which the character of today's security risks is changing. The state has to react in some way to these tectonic shifts in the field of security, in particular concerning security risks. Hence, and because so far, there has not been a similar scientific research and study of security risks in

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the Republic of North Macedonia, we decided to fill this gap in our security studies and practice. Basically, it is necessary to find out to what extent and in what way the general changes in the character of security risks influence the scope, the structure and the appearance of security risks in the Macedonian society and state today, in order to recognise the character of modern security risks and thus find the most appropriate approaches to prevention, response, management and assessment for those who create and decide on security policies in the Republic of North Macedonia.

An unfavourable political and security situation requires a detailed analysis and addressing all parts of society in order for everybody to contribute to a timely detection of potential security risks and threats and for the responsible institutions to take appropriate measures in due time, so that possible risks can be prevented before they turn into larger-scale security threats.

Based on the above-mentioned conditions and considerations, the Faculty of Security Studies' research team carried out a scientific and research project in 2017, including an empiric research, i.e. a survey among the expert community on current security risks and threats in the Republic of North Macedonia.

The aim of the survey was to explore opinions and positions of representatives of the security institutions on questions concerning security risks in the Republic of North Macedonia. The findings from the survey and the scientific research project will not only benefit security scholars, but also policy makers and managers at the security institutions of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The **questionnaire** contains the following bundles of questions: biographical data, the definition of the term "risk"; how knowledge on risks was achieved; assessment of different types of threats to society (in what kind of society do we live with respect to risks); a broad range of risks are given and the respondent is asked to rank the risks, starting with the ones that represent the greatest threat to society and ending with the least; the intensity of the impact of risks on personal safety of citizens as well as the vital interests of the state; reasons for current security risks in the Republic of North Macedonia; assessment of the quality of creating and implementing security policies; quality of the implementation of methods of security risk assessment and drafting a security strategy. At the end, there are open questions that allow expressing opinions on security risks which are not included in the questionnaire.

Of course, science plays a major role in detecting dangers and offering solutions for dealing with potential risks and threats. The Faculty of Security continuously carries out scientific and research projects on security issues, thus contributing scientifically justified facts and offering possible solutions in order for the responsible security institutions to be adequately set up in time, so that effects of potential threats can be minimised or even detected and prevented in time.

The study at hand aims to determine the security risks that North Macedonia's society and state are facing today. Assuming that we are living in a very risky society with a growing number of increasingly fluid and diverse security risks, we refer to a contemporary theoretical basis in which today's risks are considered as a societal and security problem. Above all, we were determined to assess whether we encounter the basic features of security risks typical of globalised and postmodern societies in the context of the conditions of today's society and the setup of the state and its security agencies.

The theoretical framework of the study at hand refers to Ulrich Beck's concept of risk society, Anthony Giddens' theory of ontological security, and Zygmunt Bauman's theory of liquid life and the age of uncertainty. The research was carried out using the quantitative and the qualitative method combined.

The **aim** of the research project is to gain valid scientific insight concerning the existing security risks and their types, as well as prevention, management and assessment of security risks, based on an analysis of the current opinions and positions of the expert community. The survey results as well as the entire scientific research project will not only benefit security scholars, but also policy makers and managers at the security institutions of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The **object** of this research is to determine the character of security risks in North Macedonia's society and state today in the context of the changes in security risks under the conditions of globalisation and postmodern societies.

Methods and procedures of collecting data for the research

For the purposes of this research, a questionnaire with both closed-ended and open-ended questions was used to collect primary data, with the majority of questions being closed-ended. The sample of the research is intended and includes directors and persons responsible for management, analysis and assessment of security risks at institutions that are in charge of public, state and private security in the Republic of North Macedonia. 100 respondents participated in the research (representatives from public institutions, state security institutions, representatives from private security sector, as well as students at security related studies).

The questionnaire consists of questions in which security risks are identified and prioritised. Additionally, the intensity of the opinions and positions of the respondents is measured concerning every security risks, using a five-level Likert-type scale. The security institutions which participate in the survey are the Ministry of the Interior (the

Administration for Security and Counter-intelligence and the Public Security Bureau), which is in charge of public security, the Protection and Rescue Directorate, the Crisis Management Centre, the Intelligence Agency and the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of North Macedonia, which are in charge of state security, and the Chamber for Private Security and private agencies (providers of private security services), in charge of private security. Some of the institutions received the questionnaire by email, while some of the respondents were directly approached and personally handed the questionnaire, which was immediately filled out.

Besides the questionnaire, which was used for collecting primary data, the study includes an analysis of relevant research on the topic which has been conducted in the Republic of North Macedonia and abroad. This secondary data was analysed together with the primary data, providing help in explaining and interpreting the research results.

Methods of data analysis

After collection, the data was organised and classified by designing a code book for the answers to the questionnaire. The open-ended questions were organised applying the contextual approach (organising the questions in groups of answers by similarity). Even though the primary variable of the survey sample is professionalism and expertise of the respondents within security institutions, the answers to the questionnaire were also analysed according to the following variables: sex, age, place of residence, education, religion, ethnicity, and employment status. After the organisation and classification of the data received, a variable statistical analysis was carried out, using the statistical analysis approach in order to determine the significance and its intensity concerning the relations among the variables in the hypotheses. Applying this analysis, the research hypotheses were verified, i.e. confirmed or discarded. A chi-squared non-parametric test of the statistical significance of the relations between the variables of the research hypotheses was included in the analysis in order to confirm the significance of the relation between variables in the empirical distributions with the distributions from the hypotheses. Furthermore, the contingency coefficient C was applied to determine the intensity of the relations among the variables from the research hypotheses. The research was carried out with material and technical support from the Faculty of Security and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The received data was processed using Microsoft Excel. For the statistical calculations, the research team used SPSS statistical software.

Territorial scope of the research

The research was carried out in the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia. Since most security institutions (particularly public and state security) are based in Skopje, the research was mostly carried out in Skopje, with the exception of private security institutions (agencies that offer private security services), which are located throughout the country.

The sample includes 100 respondents who are employed with the security institutions and private security agencies in various cities of the Republic of North Macedonia, unemployed security study graduates or students of security studies. Out of 100 respondents, 70 were male and 30 female.

For the distribution of respondents according to sex, please see the chart below.

Chart No.1: *Respondents according to sex*

SEX

female **30%**   **70%** male
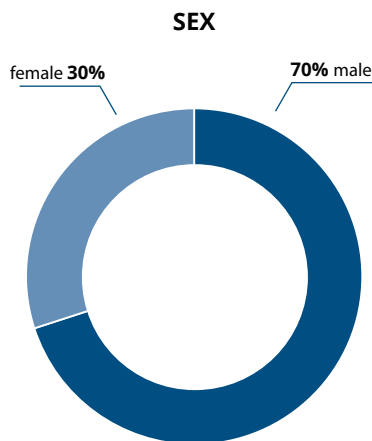
As for the age, respondents were organised in the following age groups: up to 25 years (14 respondents), 26 to 30 years (18 respondents), 31 to 35 years (22 respondents), 36 to 40 years (16 respondents) and 41 and more years (30 respondents).

For the distributions of respondents according to age, please see the chart below.

Chart No.2 : *Respondents according to age*
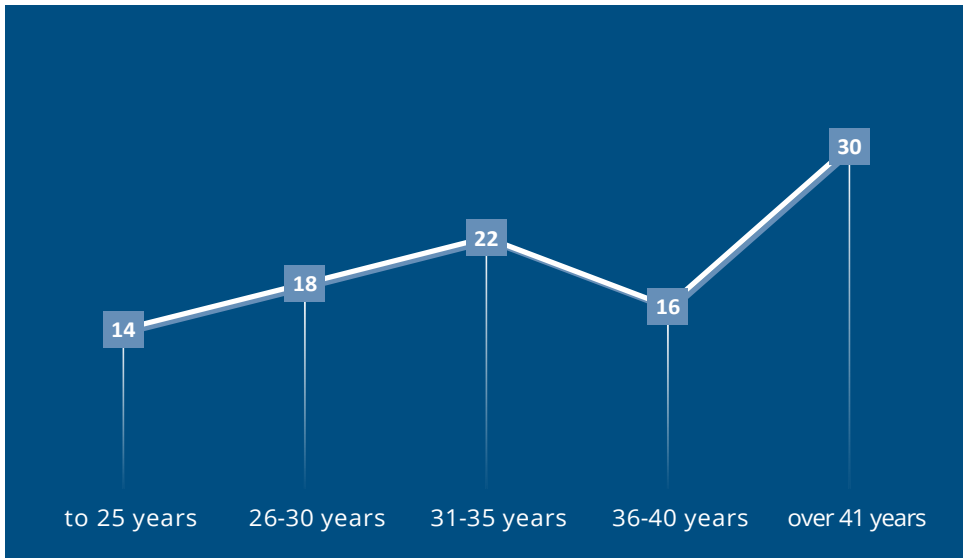
As we can see from the chart, one third of the respondents are older than 41 years. In our representative sample, the largest group of respondents have worked within security institutions for many years and have been in charge of monitoring and assessing security risks as part of their duties, which accounts for the quality of the respondents' answers and suggestions given in the questionnaires. Those answers and suggestions will be taken into account when drafting the questionnaires for future surveys.

For the respondents' degree of education, please see the chart below.

Chart No.3: *Respondents according to degree of education*
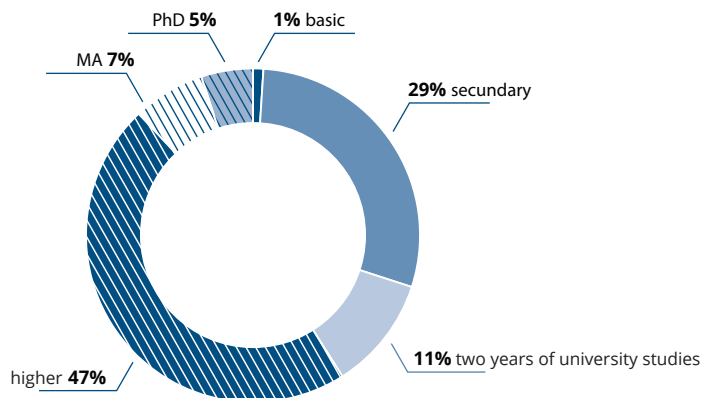
Out of the respondents, one received basic education, 29 secondary education, 11 completed two years of university studies, 47 higher education, seven completed master studies and five hold a doctorate. A majority of the respondents have completed tertiary education with several years of work experience in the area of security. Almost half of the respondents (47%) have completed university education, and another 12% have completed master's or doctoral studies, adding up to a total of 59%, which is of great significance for the analysis of the results, given that we are dealing with relevant well-educated professionals with several years of work experience that includes recognising and ranking security risks.

As for the employment status, a large majority (90%) are permanent employees, with security institutions as well as with private security services. An insignificant number of respondents are unemployed or students at universities which train security professionals.

The largest group of respondents is employed with private security services (40 respondents), followed by the Intelligence Agency (38 respondents) and the Ministry of the Interior.

Chart No.4: *Respondents according to institution*
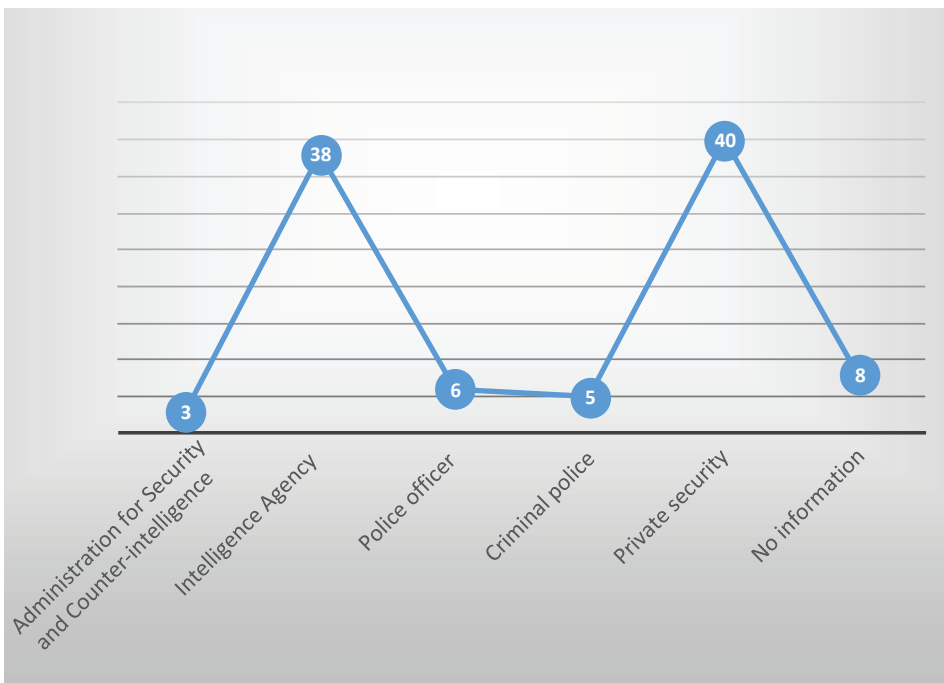
The first question was "How would you define the term 'risk'?". Three possible answers to this questions were offered: 1) "A possible achievement following an event", 2) "A possible danger following an event", and 3) "A possible achievement or danger following an event". A huge majority of respondents, namely 97%, chose the second definition, stating that, for them, **the term 'risk' is defined as a possible danger following an event.**

The question also included the possibility to give an open-ended answer. Below, you can see some of the answers:

› A detected security phenomenon which has to be prevented in due time.

› Depending on the situation, the context and the sphere of society, the term can indicate an achievement, i.e. that to take a certain risk can lead to a certain achievement, mainly in the sphere of economy, while in the sphere of security, it can indicate a certain danger or an escalation leading to a conflict situation.

› The answer to this question depends on the point of view on this phenomenon, namely, whether we look at a security problem from the point of view of the possibility of a risk or from the point of view of its actual occurrence.

› The moment in a given situation which we can learn from, it can be assessed in order to prevent or to face it. In both cases, the scope of future recognition is broadened.

Chart No.5: *How did you gain your knowledge?*
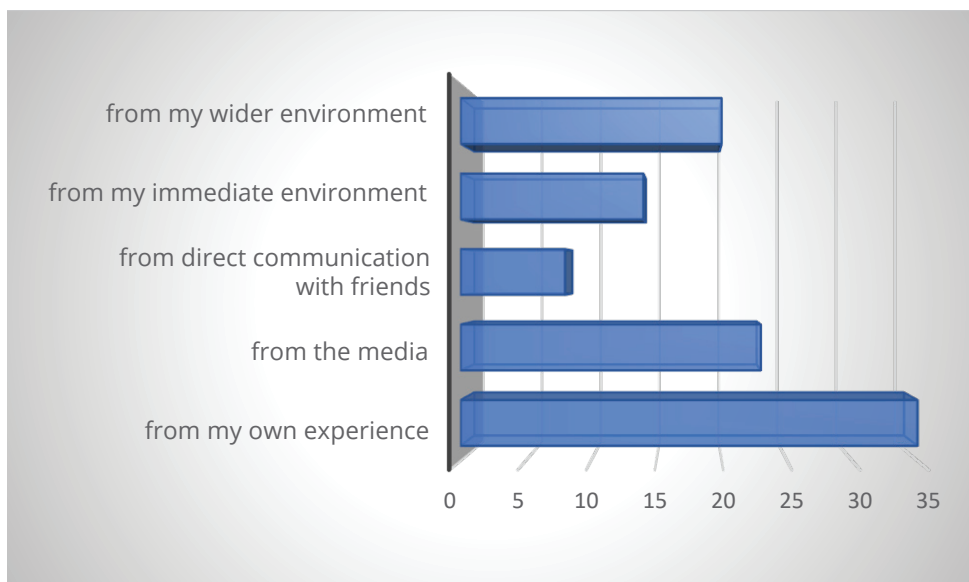
To the question "How did you gain your knowledge on security risks?", the largest group of respondents (35%) answered "from my own experience". Having in mind that the over 41 year olds were largest age group among the respondents, looking back on several years of experience in analysis and assessment of security risks, the fact that they have gained their knowledge from their own experience comes as a confirmation. The next group stated that they have gained their primary information on potential security risks from the media (23%), while 20% stated that they have gained it from their wider environment, 14% from their immediate environment, and 8% from their direct communication with friends.

Compared to other origins of information, the media were mentioned way more frequently than educational institutions, the family, direct communication with friends, the immediate environment (work), the wider environment (neighbourhood), etc. The media are an exceptionally strong weapon when it comes to influencing the public opinion. The question about the objectivity of the media and their being subject to the influence of political parties, individuals, organised crime groups, etc., must be posed. The less objective the media, the easier for individuals or groups to influence the perception of a broader public with regard to the significance of security risks, to the benefit of the ones who order and finance the programmes on risks that are broadcast. Non-objective and biased journalism benefits the interests of individuals or groups who influence the media. Media can be utilised by individuals or groups for spreading non-objective views on risks.

The data on the outstanding role of the media in shaping the public opinion on security phenomena, including security risks, is very important, having in mind the establishment of a democratic system in which the media's role is to provide objective information, without being influenced by any groups whatsoever. In the latter case, citizens will receive objective information and thus form a realistic perception of what is happening in the state, including threats from different types of risks to their own safety and to the security of the vital institutions.

Relations between the media and society are complex and multifaceted. Democracy cannot advance without independent and critical media. Journalists should openly and critically point at all irregularities in the development of society, so that they can be solved. During societal development, potential risks and dangers keep changing. With the evolution of a society, phenomena that have a negative impact on society have evolved as well. The main task of the media is to analyse the phenomena linked to threats to the society's development and to objectively inform citizens, so that they receive a realistic picture of the reasons and factors that lead to the appearance of negative phenomena and their development.

The media can be very helpful in detecting negative phenomena in due time

and identifying the individuals or groups who support or conceal them. Thus, media can facilitate the detection of potential risks that can destabilise the security situation, which will allow state institutions to take preventive measures in time and thus to cope with potential security risks.

One of the media's roles is to correct the government and to guard and warn the public of impending dangers. According to Harold Lasswell, the media's task is to explain and interpret information, so that the society understands what it means. Hence, the media should not merely transmit information, but also explain it, so that the citizens understand what is being talked about. One could say that it is the media's role to correct the government, being immune to the latter's influence, for the benefit of an objective picture of reality. There lies their true role in shaping an objective truth about societal phenomena, including those which have a negative impact on society and can destroy its system, such as potential security risks. If individuals from within the state institutions are involved in those negative phenomena, and, at the same time, have influence over media, they can use the latter to spread non-objective information and thus influence the shaping of a non-objective public opinion, so that their own prohibited activity is concealed.

Mutual influence of media and society

The relations within a society also determine the relations between the media and the society. The media cannot be perceived as positioned beyond or above the society. What media are like depends on the society they are part of; in other words, a society shapes its media.

We talk about media as the fourth estate or fourth power, and they do possess great power, being in the position to influence the society as well as the individual. Society itself has to enable journalists to work professionally, independently, and autonomously. Under such circumstances, no influence is exerted on the journalists, but their reporting influences other parts of society, including civil society. Journalists should not play the role of judges, prosecutors or policemen, but do their own job, which means that they should objectively report on what is happening and leave everything else to others.

Today, public communication is part of the culture industry and has an impact on the rules of the market, and media products (newspapers, the internet, TV, radio, books, movies, etc.) are crucial for shaping experiences, feelings and impressions that enable us to understand the world (Peter Golding & Graham Murdock, 2012).

What does the public, i.e., what do citizens expect from the media: (Rosemary Armao, 2010)

› Inform the citizens about how they could act;
› emphasise the citizens' responsibility for risks;
› familiarise citizens with the consequences of security risks;
› control government programmes on coping with risks;
› prevention: create an environment in which risks are detected in time and then compensated or entirely averted.

According to the author of the list above, transparency must be one of the main characteristics of today's media. Media have to be transparent and "free" for the benefit of objective information. The property of the media, the methods of collecting information, and journalistic ethics have to be subject to inspection by the public if the latter is expected to trust the media's reports on potential risks within society.

Citizens' perception concerning ways of risk identification

Today, we are witnessing the transformation of security risks and threats. While risks which formerly used to represent serious threats to security are diminishing, new risks are emerging, posing a serious threat, not only to the security of the Republic of North Macedonia and the region, but beyond. If those risks are not detected in time and if the responsible institutions do not take appropriate measures, the risks can turn into serious threats to the vital interests of the state and the safety of the citizens.

Hence, it is of great importance for the state institutions to identify potential security risks in time, so that adequate tools can be established in due time and potential risks do not become threats to security. The institutions could thus regain the citizens' trust, one of the main aims of every institution which seeks to be reliable and to apply international and European standards in order to provide better and more secure conditions for their citizens. Due to the process of democratisation, all citizens have the possibility to report information on potential risks and their initiators to the competent state institutions, while their identity will be protected. Thus, every member of civil society is involved in the timely identification, discovery and prevention of security risks. We can conclude that the main task of security institutions is to detect in time, to recognise and to appropriately assess potential security risks. To this end, all levels of the public institutions have to be entirely determined to assess the risks. Establishing a system of societal integrity will first and foremost have an effect on diminishing the threats from potential risks and on achieving a certain level of culture of security among the employees of the competent security institutions.

Security risks have to be assessed in the framework of security policy, i.e. a policy of risk resistance, which includes organised, planned and comprehensive activities by the competent security institutions, as well as all other stakeholders, in order to detect and prevent prohibited activities in the security sphere (Bošković M., 2004).

Contemporary trends of risk assessment concentrate on prevention. One model of coping with risks is based on the situational preventive measures of the British criminologist Ronald V. Clarke. His typology of preventive measures focuses on diminishing opportunities and creating conditions that are unfavourable for committing crimes that affect security. Besides measures to make it harder to commit crimes, to increase the risk for offenders and to decrease the benefit from criminal activity, preventive measures include "preventing unawareness of rights and duties" (professionalisation, familiarity with legal duties that regulate certain activities within society, moral judgement of delinquency, precisely defined declarations and procedures, support of exemplary behaviour and activities). (Clarke, R.V. (2000).

Most domestic and foreign security scholars discern two different approaches to coping with security risks: preventive and repressive measures. Scholars as well as practitioners are divided on the questions which measures are more effective, with one camp favouring preventive and the other repressive measures.

The supporters of repressive measures do not neglect prevention, but claim that repression leads to better results and needs to be applied in the struggle against security risks.

Those who favour preventive measures think that it is better to include all society stakeholders in averting risks and eradicating the causes of potential risks turning into threats and dangers. They do not exclude repressive measures, but regard them as a necessary evil in case the preventive struggle does not lead to the desired results. In the latter case, supporters of preventive measures favour milder repressive ones. According to their understanding, the society and the state are responsible for regulating laws and enforcing them appropriately. Hence, if the adoption or implementation of a law is affected by irregularities caused by a risk, the society is responsible, too, not only the individual within the organisation of society and the state.

The supporters of the third, mixed approach deem preventive and repressive risk management measures equally important. They suggest to apply them in combination, which they see as the most successful approach to coping with risks. They advocate the implementation of legislative and other measures which have led to good results in developed countries, as reports published by the international security institutions show.

In the next question of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate the society we are living in today concerning the number and type of security risks we are facing. Three items of gradation were offered in the questionnaire, but the respondents also had the possibility to give their own assessment.

Chart No.6: *Today's society and number and type of risks*
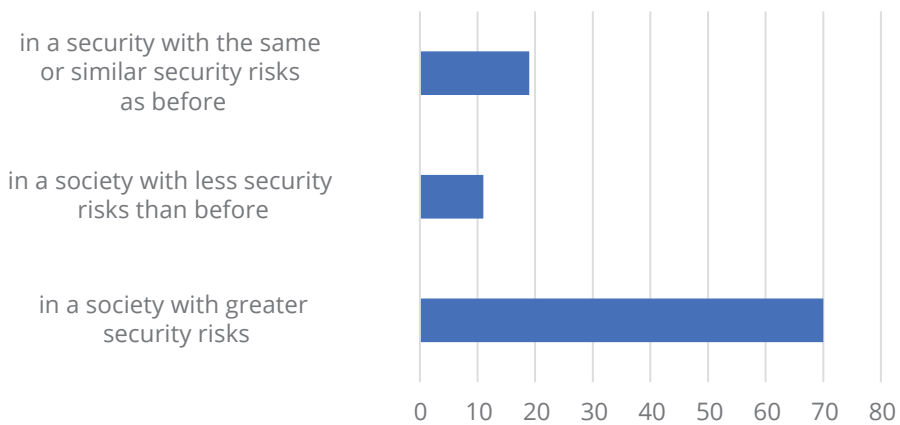
To the question in what kind of society we live today regarding the number and type of security risks, more than two thirds (70%) of the respondents chose the option "in a society with greater security risks", i.e. a risk society, 19% chose the option "in a society with the same or similar security risks as before", and 11% "in a society with less security risks than before".

It is alarming to see that two thirds of the expert community think that today's society is a society of greater risks, or a so-called risk society. Their assessment is certainly due to relevant facts that are crucial indicators in the assessment of security risks and dangers. It indicates the need of a more serious approach of the responsible state institutions towards timely recognition and monitoring of potential risks and taking appropriate measures to prevent the risks from turning into severe threats to the broader security situation. The new risks and threats are neither a national nor a regional problem, but challenge the entire international community, given that they can destabilise not only an entire region, but the whole world. Hence, in order to monitor and manage those risks, international cooperation in various areas is necessary, including the exchange of information among intelligence agencies and a common strategy of

the international security institutions. If the international community adapts a common, unified and determined approach, the efficiency of risk management will increase.

The different viewpoints of EU member states concerning the new risks bear witness to how severe they are. The member states follow different approaches to those risks that increasingly destabilise many of them. This disunity among the international community is skilfully used by the initiators and supporters of the new risks, whose final goal is to destabilise the international security institutions, which will affect the security of all countries, especially less developed countries that are not very strong, such as the Republic of North Macedonia.

The expert community agrees that we are facing serious security risks, in addition to the transition problems, the political crisis concerning the name change, the political boycotts, and the dysfunctionality of the political system. All of this can lead to an escalation of the security system with unpredictable consequences. Hence, security institutions have to develop a more serious approach and greater professionalism in fulfilling their duties as stipulated by law in order not to allow potential risks to become serious threats.

The answers to the question "According to your opinion, which security risks affect your security most?" deserve our special attention. The respondents could choose several options from a list of 18 types of risks which have been pressing during the last few years and represent the greatest threats to security. The respondents ranked the risks from the lists, from greatest to least threat to security. They had the possibility to add risks that were not given in the list and to include them in their ranking.

Chart No.7: *List of risks that effect your security most*
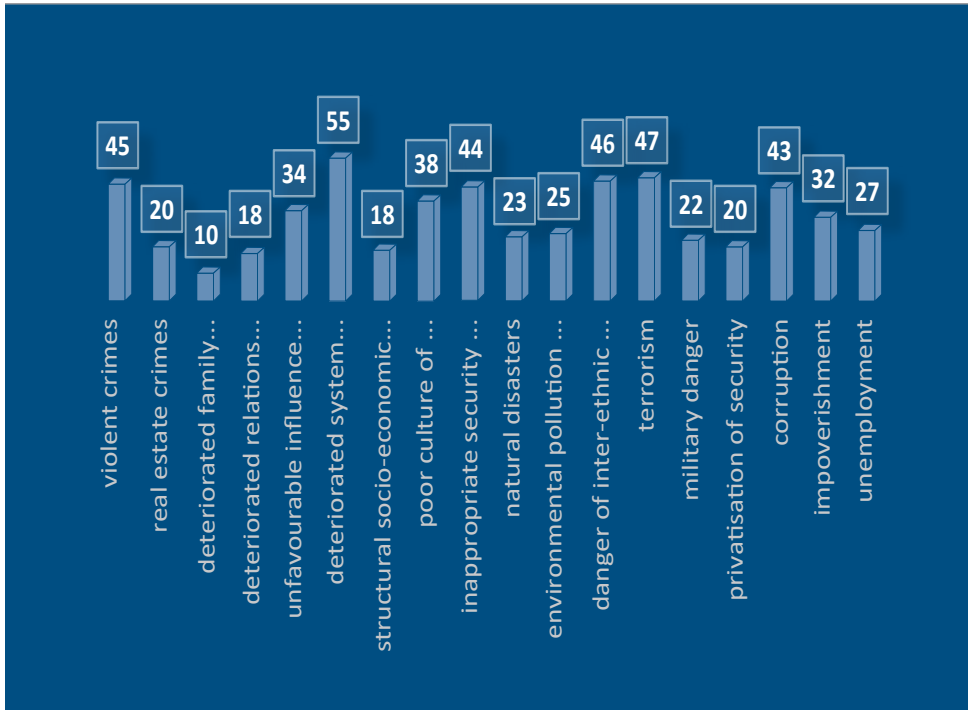
The number indicates how many respondents chose the respective type of risk to threaten security most

› *45 violent crimes*
› *20 real estate crimes*
› *10 deteriorated family relations*
› *18 deteriorated relations with the immediate environment*
› *34 unfavourable influence of the media*
› **55 deteriorated system of societal values**
› *18 structural socio-economic changes*
› *38 poor culture of security*
› *44 inappropriate security policy*
› *23 natural disasters*
› *25 environmental pollution and climate change*
› *46 danger of inter-ethnic conflicts*
› *47 terrorism*
› *22 military danger*
› *20 privatisation of security*

›   *43 corruption*
›   *32 impoverishment*
›   *27 unemployment*

According to the respondents, the greatest threat to security is the **deteriorated system of societal values.** More than half of the respondents (**55%**) had this option at the top of their ranking of security risks.

The values of a society are determined by the primary legal act of every state, the constitution. When the socio-political and economic system of a state changes, its system of values changes as well. The main task of every security system is to protect the basic values as determined by the state's constitution. The societal values of the former social, political and economic system are past, and today's new values are based on the system of parliamentary democracy. After gaining independence, the Republic of North Macedonia established new international relations and went through serious internal changes, such as giving up socialism, self-government, and public property as the dominant type of property, introducing a new legal system, establishing a civil society, privatising public capital, etc. The country was faced with a period of fundamental changes and transformations, giving up the former system of values (the socialist system, the one-party system, public property, brotherhood and unity, etc.) and building up a new one that had to enable new societal processes and relations that should add new quality to the citizens' life. To give up one system of values and to build a new one does not only mean to introduce new legal norms and other legal acts to define the new values, but also a change of mind of the people, which cannot be bought nor sold. People can change their minds, but a certain period of time and convincing facts are necessary, too (Spaseski J., Asimoski P., 2016).

In the independent Republic of North Macedonia, the system of new, changed values includes respect of the human and citizen's rights and freedoms, free expression of ethnicity, etc.

The main task of the security system is to protect the societal values. When the values of a system are deteriorated, there is a serious threat to security, and the security system is considered non-efficient in protecting the values.

The respondents ranked terrorism the second greatest threat to security. Unfortunately, in our time, violence and terrorist methods seem to be a faster and more efficient way to attain certain goals than doing it the legal way. Terrorism is a global threat, and neither the region nor the Republic of North Macedonia represent an exception. During the past 20 years, certain structures have continuously been trying to resort to terrorism in order to reach their political, religious or ideological goals that cannot be legally reached. According to the expert community, terrorism will remain a serious threat to the security of the Republic of North Macedonia in the future.

According to the respondents, deteriorated interethnic relations can lead to the destabilisation of the state's security. Given that North Macedonia is a multi-ethnic and multi-confessional state, it is very important to respect the freedom of expression concerning religion and ethnicity. It is no coincidence that the Constitution as well as the Concept on Defence and Security, a strategic document, quote free expression of ethnicity and equal respect of the human rights and freedoms of all citizens, regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation, as fundamental values. Research has shown that, during the last 28 years, in which the Republic of North Macedonia has been independent and autonomous, the most serious security threats have been linked to the incitement of ethnic intolerance and inter-ethnic conflicts, as was the case in 2001. Hence, inter-ethnic relations should be treated seriously in order to control that type of security risk so that it cannot turn into a threat to broader security.

According to the survey results, violent crimes (45%) are next in the ranking of the most important security risks. Unfortunately, there has been an increase during the last few years, followed by an inappropriate security policy (44%). 43% of the respondents said that the serious consequences of a corrupt society which have a negative impact on the overall security of citizens are the most dangerous risk. According to the non-governmental organisation *Transparency International*, (Corruption Perceptions Index 2013, p. 3; http://www.transparency.org/cpi2013/results [7.02.2014]) North Macedonia belongs to the group of states with high corruption. The latter disintegrates the system and renders efficiency of the security institutions and their coping with potential security risks impossible.

Today, **corruption** is one of the most severe threats to the rule of law. That means that, **instead of a rule of law and its norms, the rule is in the hands of individuals who are led by self-serving goals and interests.** In that type of governance, self-content and autocracy dominate, (most often) based on business interests. Corruption is a societal situation and practice which has a negative impact on the entire development of a society, slows down economic processes, worsens social security, and destroys the belief in values and principles, in particular legality, equality, and freedom. Corruption is established and expressed as hidden and unlawful redistribution and (mis)use of the nucleus of societal power. By means of corruption, accompanied by other mechanisms of a party state, power is privatised and thus turned into a commodity. Within this framework, the exchange of political power for material goods takes place. Hence, in the Republic of North Macedonia, corruption, especially mass corruption, is a key factor in the acquisition of certain public goods and services. One of the basic values of a democratic society is to respect the fundamental human and citizens' rights and freedoms. Corruption is a serious threat to democracy, justice, human rights, and social justice, and it hampers the economic development of a state. Corruption is opposed to the rule of law and a direct threat to democratic institutions and the moral foundation of a society (Mojanovski C. et al. 2018, p. 3).

A poor **culture of security** was ranked the seventh greatest risk by the respondents (38%). An insufficiently developed culture of security among citizens, and even more among individuals and groups who occupy certain positions in politics and security, has a particularly negative impact regarding timely detection of potential risks. A culture of security as a special type of awareness will be shaped when a person's desire or necessity to achieve the required level of personal and societal security becomes part of their consciousness. In that case, we could say that a person has reached a certain level of culture of security. The latter is highly important for individual, national and global security. We can hardly consider a person or a state safe if the individuals have not established their own culture of security, and if a society does not provide the conditions for its establishment and development as a part of general culture. A poor culture of security can certainly have negative impacts on security, as confirmed by the survey results.

37% of the respondents said that unfavourable influence of the media is an important security risk. The objectivity of the media is put into question, raising the issue of their being influenced by political parties, individuals, organised crime groups, etc. The more non-objective and biased information on security issues the media publish, the higher the probability of unrealistic and non-timely risk assessments. Most of the studies concerning the media carried out in North Macedonia show that they have a huge impact on the public opinion concerning security issues. In order to achieve objective and high-quality risk assessment, it is important, among all other factors, to build a democratic system in which media fulfil the task of objective information, without being influenced by any structures whatsoever.

The relations between the media and society are complex and multifaceted. Democracy cannot advance without independent and critical media. Journalists should openly and critically point at all irregularities in the development of society, so that they can be solved. During societal development, potential risks and dangers keep changing. With the evolution of a society, phenomena that have a negative impact on society have evolved as well. The main task of the media is to analyse the phenomena linked to threats to the society's development and to inform citizens objectively so that they receive a realistic picture of the reasons and factors that lead to the appearance of negative phenomena and their development. The media can be very helpful in detecting negative phenomena in due time and identifying the individuals or groups who support or conceal them. Thus, media can facilitate the detection of persons who take advantage of their official authorisation for the benefit of private, party, of external interests, thus impeding the state institutions and their taking preventive measures in due time and coping with potential risks.

The low standard of living and the impoverishment of the population are ranked ninth with 32% of the respondents seeing them as a serious security risk, followed by

unemployment (27%), the environment (25%), natural disasters (23%), military actions (22%), the privatisation of security (20%), real estate crimes (20%) and, last, deteriorated relations in the environment (18%).

Apart from the 18 risks included in the questionnaire, the respondents had the possibility to add other risks that they deem relevant for the security of the Republic of North Macedonia. We would like to list some of them:

› the basic resources of the Republic of North Macedonia have been taken over by foreign companies;
› weak government officials who have obligations towards different centres of power;
› entirely evoked epidemics;
› deteriorated education, which also has a negative impact on the education of security professionals;
› continued decrease of citizens' living standards;
› mass emigration of young people;
› politicisation of all levels of state institutions, including security institutions;
› lack of culture of dialogue.

Marjan Gjurovski   Marjan Nikolovski   Saše Gerasimoski

The character of security risks[12]

Risks have always captured our attention and shaped our everyday behaviour. For the last few decades, we have been witnessing serious, maybe even dramatic shifts in our understanding of the relation to risks. In most contemporary societies, risks are almost entirely understood and defined as security risks or potential dangers. Today, under the conditions of globalisation and postmodernism, the modern, or neutral concept of risks, which characterises modern societies and their rational economic world view, is being replaced by the so-called negative concept of risks, or security risks, as we name them in security studies.

Additionally, not only the very character of today's risks has changed, but, at the same time, the general understanding of the relation and handling of security risks within contemporary security studies is changing. The shift from repression to prevention as a primary approach within security studies and as a security practice is mainly caused by security risks being the most significant security phenomenon, which requires intervention as early as possible. Every well-devised and successful security policy should be mainly focused on the correct determination, assessment and handling of security risks, prior to being concerned with the threats and dangers to security.

Today, we are living in a time of globalisation and a postmodern understanding of society (Waters 2003; Scholte 2008). The dynamic of development is non-linear and characterised by many ambivalent processes, such as the paradigm change concerning security and freedom as core values, which might even be key. Conditions within societies create an atmosphere and culture of life in which people strive to maximise their freedom, and the realisation of individual liberty is seen as a social, cultural and societal achievement. Nevertheless, in these times of globalisation, the complex network of social relations and interdependence, which has greatly contributed to the breakthrough of freedom, has at the same time led to a security boost, in particular to a worriedness concerning security risks. (Bauman 2016; Bauman 2005; Beck 2001; Giddens 2002; Giddens and Hatton 2003: 14-21; Lyotard 2007; Godard, Henry, Lagadec and Michel-Kerjan, 2002; Svendsen 2010).

Today, not only security institutions, but also citizens themselves are permanently preoccupied with understanding, assessing and coping with security risks. Some of the most prominent scholars, such as Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens, have defined this phenomenon as *risk culture*. For societies in which risks are omnipresent and define relations within society, they coined the term risk society. Today, we can assume

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that most societies and cultures, including the Macedonian one, are affected by these contemporary changes and processes to a certain degree. The true question is whether and to what extent that impact can be observed. Most often, the answer depends on the involvement of the society or culture in question in the process of globalisation and today's postmodern neo-liberal society. The views of Beck and Giddens are laid out in their theoretical paradigms, which form part of the so-called reflexive risk theories (Gerasimoski, Nikolovski, Gjurovski, 2018: 1-8; Gerasimoski, Mojsoska, Trajkovska, 2013: 214-225).

We have to differentiate between research on the public opinion, views and perceptions of citizens concerning security risks, on the one hand, and research on opinions, views and perceptions concerning security risks within security institutions, on the other. Basically, we can assume that the results of both kinds of research will differ, mostly because security professionals with their everyday experience in working with security risks can have different opinions, views and perceptions on security risks. Therefore, research on security risks carried out within security institutions has advantage as well as downsides. A realistic picture of the character of security risks could be achieved by comparing the data on opinions, views and perceptions from within security institutions, on the one hand, and the broader public, on the other. Hence, the research on security risks as viewed by Macedonian security institutions carried out by the team from the Faculty of Security is no exception to this general statement, which the research results will further confirm. The limited possibility of generalisation of the findings with regard to a broader statistical mass and the descriptive character of the statistical data processing are the most serious restrictions to the research at hand. Nevertheless, the significance of its primary findings, quantitative and qualitative, is not lessened by these restrictions.

The character of a risk can be defined as the contents and appearance of a risk in a given society or culture, the consistency of its characteristics with regard to its origin and type, its predictability, scale, and intensity. Defining the character of security risks as seen by Macedonian security institutions will allow us to gain direct insight into the specifics of security risks in North Macedonia, their features and structure. After defining their character, the security risks can be ranked according to the importance of the values which they are related to, and the most adequate means of prevention and management can be determined.

Contemporary security studies and theories on coping with, managing and assessing risks focus on the primary significance of correct detection of security risks and their prioritisation (ranking by importance). The latter is carried out with regard to the values that the security risks are related to. Hence, the importance of the value determines the extent of the security risk, and thus its significance and its handling in reference to other security risks. Prioritisation is important in order to define the

priorities of security policy concerning security risk management, if we are facing various security risks at the same time. Prioritisation of security risks is followed by analysis (assessment and forecast), and then by handling (Vogan 2014; Gemović, 2011; Gerasimoski, 2018: 327-338; Keković, Bakreski, Stefanovski, Pavlović 2016).

In the framework of the study at hand, security risks were determined and prioritised, based on a specific approach defined by the research team. Namely, the questionnaire, which was distributed among public, state and private security institutions, included a semi-open-ended list of security risks, which included 18 security risks, with the possibility for the respondents to add risks that were not included. The respondents were free to choose as many options as they wanted as an answer to question No. 4, the aim of which was to find out which security risks get the most mentions from the respondents. In the next question, No. 5, the respondents were asked to compile a priority list, i.e. a list of the security risks they had chosen in question 4 according to their importance. Based on these two questions, we could sum up the security risks from all 151 questionnaires, i.e. respondents, and received a list of security risks according to their priority as seen by security institutions. Thus, we could prioritise the security risks (list them according to their significance, starting from the significant one).

As an answer to the question "Which security risks affect security most?" the respondents could tick as many security risks from the given list. Based on the respondents' choices, we could single out the top five out of the 18 security risks from the list. Out of 151 respondents, 53 (22%) chose the option "terrorism", 52 (21%) "deteriorated system of societal values", and, as high as third, "inappropriate security policy", chosen by 48 respondents (20%). 47 respondents (19%) considered the option "corruption", and 43 (18%) "danger of an inter-ethnic conflict" as most important threats to the security of North Macedonia. These figures can be seen from the following chart.

Chart No.8: *Security risks that affect security most*
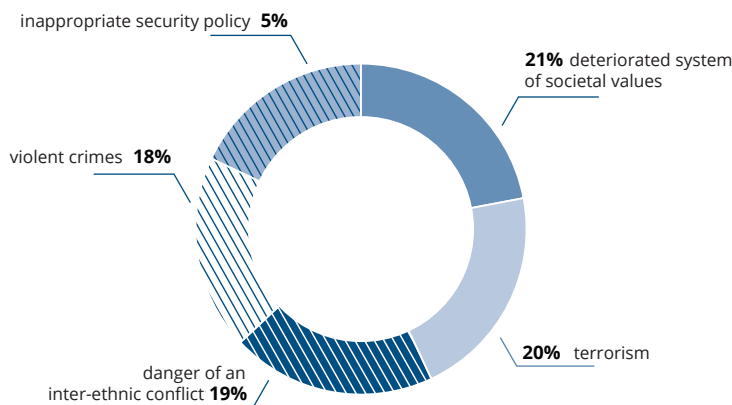
From the answers to this question, we can see that manufactured security risks, i.e. risks that follow from inappropriate decisions and interventions in society, prevail over a much smaller number of external risks, i.e. security risks that we cannot influence, or that we can influence only to a minor degree. Thus, we can see that, with the exception of the risk that was chosen by most respondents, terrorism, which is originally external, all most significant risks are manufactured (Gerasimoski, 2018: 14). This accounts for the fact that we are actually facing a shift from external to manufactured risks, while, according to the research team's impression, the basic distinction of risks and the shift which is taking place are not sufficiently recognised by the respondents from the security institutions. The high rank of terrorism can be attributed to two factors, which have to be further analysed in future research. The first factor is the very perception of terrorism as a risk, i.e. the fear and subjective dimension linked to it, which does not necessarily correspond with the actual threat and danger. The second factor is quite clearly professional bias, or the professional prejudices typical of persons who work with security institutions all around the world, which have to be more sensitive to some types of security risks because they are dealing with them every day. The subjectivity of this factor can be determined and overcome only by means of a comparative research on the opinions, views and perceptions of the public, on the one hand, and security professionals, on the other. Another striking feature of the answers is that "inappropriate security policy" came in third. Some security incidents that happened during the last few years bear witness to the fact that there is a strong correlation between inappropriate security policy and our reality. Those incidents showed that inappropriate security assessment and security policy, which are tightly linked, were among the main factors that lead to a relatively unsuccessful handling of the risks in question.

In question No.6, the respondents were asked to determine the intensity of the impact of the security risks which chosen and prioritised in the preceding questions. The aim of this question was to measure the strength of the opinion, i.e. to find out how much every risk chosen by the respondents affects security, according to their view. For measuring the intensity of the opinions and views of the respondents, we used a standard Likert-type scale with a range from 1 to 5, with 1 representing the option "has extremely little impact", 2 "has little impact", 3 "has relative (some) impact", 4 "has a huge impact", and 5 "has an extremely huge impact". The members of the research team found it particularly interesting to examine the correlation between the priority list of security risks and the intensity of impact attributed to every security risk, and to see whether and where they differ, and what this can be due to (Nikolovski, Gerasimoski, Gjurovski, 2018:43). For the results, please see the following table.

Table No.1: *Intensity of the impact of separate risks on security*

| Security risk	has an extremely huge impact 5	has a huge impact 4	has relative (some) impact 3	has little impact 2	has extremely little impact 1
violent crimes	34	22	26	12	5
real estate crimes	10	27	30	18	8
deteriorated family relations	8	10	30	14	26
deteriorated relations with the immediate environment (peers, friends, colleagues)	8	24	19	23	18
unfavourable influence of the media (stereotypes, prejudices, disinformation)	27	25	23	9	6
deteriorated system of societal values	**44**	33	17	4	0
structural socio-economic changes	13	42	26	14	1
poor culture of security	27	27	27	13	3
inappropriate security policy	**46**	26	18	3	3

environmental disasters (earthquakes, floods, fires, etc.)	19	17	28	16	13
environmental pollution and climate change	22	28	26	17	6
danger of inter-ethnic conflicts	**40**	42	18	8	0
terrorism	**43**	29	14	7	2
military danger	32	22	19	19	3
negative privatisation of security	23	18	21	17	5
corruption	**42**	30	15	10	1
impoverishment	37	27	25	6	2
unemployment	36	29	19	5	7

This question is linked to the preceding one, and its results have to be examined in relation to the answers to the latter. A thorough analysis and comparison of the answers to both questions shows that the most significant security risks in North Macedonia were also determined as having the strongest impact by the respondents. This not only indicates that the respondents were convinced of their choice of the most important security risks, but that they also think that their impact on security is "extremely huge" or "huge". The latter items were most chosen by the respondents concerning all top five security risks as determined from the results of the preceding question. Not only were the top five risks mostly assessed as having "an extremely huge impact" on security, but they were also chosen by a larger number of respondents as having "an extremely huge impact" than any other security risk. From the answers to this question, we can see the strong positive correlation with the answers to questions 4 and 5, which could probably be confirmed by using one of the methods of statistical analysis for determining the significance of relations between variables.

Research on the character of security risks would not be complete without examining their causes and sources. To this end, in question No.7, the respondents were given three options - "globalisation", "regional security risks" and "security risks in North Macedonia" - , with the possibility to tick various options. The aim of the question was to find out which of these three origins is most significant for the appearance of security risks, and then, by correlating these answers with those from tightly linked questions, to provide a clearer picture of the character of today's security risks as seen from within the security institutions. A majority of the respondents, 66 (44%) said that

security risks mostly come from within North Macedonia, i.e. that most security risks have an internal origin. 59 respondents (39%) said that security risks are mostly regional, and 26 respondents (17%) saw globalisation as the main origin of security risks. These figures can be seen from chart No.9.

Chart No.9: *Origins of security risks*
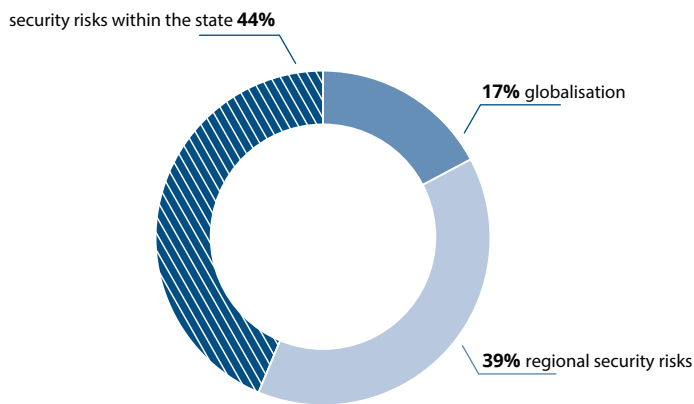
The answers to this question clearly show that a majority of the respondents think that the security risks that the Republic of North Macedonia is faced with today mainly have their origin in the state itself. A smaller number think that security risks have mainly regional origins, and a minority chose globalisation as the main origin of security risks. This directly points to the fact that North Macedonia is not yet as globalised as other developed countries, and that some risks that are typical for globalisation pass the country by. However, we have to be careful when generalising, having in mind that the opinions, views and perceptions of the broader public, here and elsewhere in the world, are always more inclined towards some global security risks (e.g. ecological risks), which the security institutions, here and elsewhere, are not dealing with separately in the scope of their everyday work. This means that the respondents from the security institutions, in our country, too, have a more restricted understanding of the sources of security risks than the broader public.

The approach and methods used in the present research are in many ways unique in North Macedonia, and, as far as we know, even in the broader Balkan region. This can be seen, for example, from the structure of question No.8, in which the respondents were asked to state what security risks they themselves are confronted with. They could choose only one out of three options, which means that the options to this question were restricted in order for the security risks to be clearly determined. The

three options they could pick one from were "mostly subjective and manufactures risks (as a result of faulty decisions)", "mostly objective and external risks (as a result of factors that cannot be controlled)" and "combined risks (manufactured and external)". For the design of this question, the researchers referred to the well-known distinction between manufactured and external security risks introduced by the renowned scientists Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens. The aim of the question was to find out whether there has been a shift in the opinions, views and perceptions of the respondents within Macedonian security institutions with regard to the understanding of security risks as external and manufactured, as it is the case in developed countries.

A majority of the respondents chose the third option, i.e. 83 respondents (55%) said that they are mostly facing combined risks, 36 (24%) that they are mostly facing subjective and manufactured risks, while 30 respondents (20%) chose mostly objective and external security risks. The results can be seen from the following chart.

Chart No.10. *Relation between manufactured and external risks*
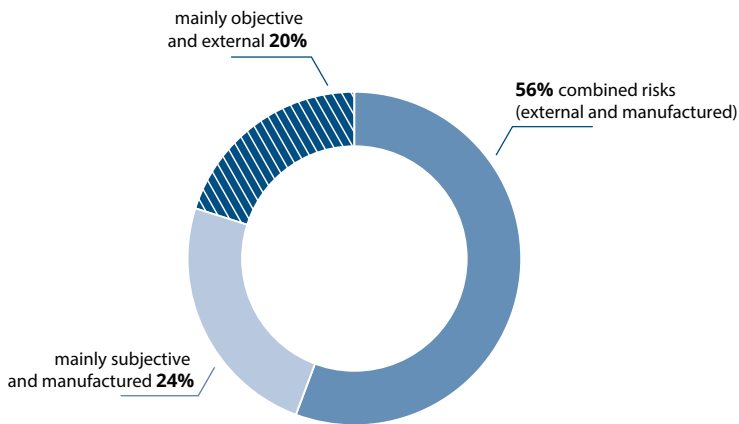
The findings from cross-checking the results from question No. 8 with the results from question No. 4 about the security risks that affect security most are very interesting. We can see that there is a certain inconsequence in the answers, since the answers to question No. 4 show that, out of the top five risks that affect security most, four can be defined as exclusively manufactured. Those security risks are results of inappropriate decisions during the process of coping with and managing security risks, namely inappropriate security policy, the danger of an inter-ethnic conflict, corruption, and the deteriorated system of societal values. Only one out of the top five risks, terrorism, can be defined as an external, or, under some circumstances, a combined risk (Gerasimoski, 2018: 15).

Comparing the answers to question No. 4 to the answers to question No. 8., we can observe a considerable discrepancy, since the majority of respondents stated that, today, we are mostly facing combined (external and manufactured) risks, a smaller number said that we are mostly facing manufactured risk, and a minority stated that we are mostly facing external risks. We think that this discrepancy is due, first and foremost, to the insufficient familiarity of the respondents with new scientific and professional findings in the area of security risks, particularly concerning the shifts in their structure, with the most important one being the domination of manufactured over external risks. Another reason for the discrepancy in the answers could be the relatively low level of integration of our society into postmodern and globalised trends, which would be one of the preconditions for a discernable shift in the structure of security risks, from external to mainly manufactured risks. This assumption is supported by a comparison with the answers to question No. 7. Here, a majority of the respondents stated that the main origins (reasons) of security risks that North Macedonia is facing lie within the state itself. The second option, regional sources of security risks, was chosen by the next group, while only a minority stated that today's security risks in North Macedonia have global sources, i.e. that they are related to the process of globalisation.

Creating security policies[13]

Out of the respondents from the public, state and private security institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia who assess security risks, only 20% said that the assessment of security risks is carried out comprehensively, systematically and continuously. 21% of the respondents said that security risks are not assessed at all, about 11% did not know or did not have an answer, and more than 46% stated that risk assessment is carried out to some extent, non-systematically and occasionally.

At the same time, only 8% of the respondents stated that, when assessing security risks, the creators of security policies from public, state and private institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia apply a well-founded approach. About 23% chose the option "I think that they rely on their own experience in dealing with security risks", about 26% opted for "I think that they apply a combined approach, based on a scientific approach to security and their own experience", and 25% said that they think neither a scientific approach nor personal experience are used. About 10% stated that they do not know how the assessment is made, and about 8% did not have an answer.

The survey went one step further, with the aim to determine what strategy for coping with security risks is applied by the security institutions of the Republic of North Macedonia. 37% of the respondents stated that they think that a strategy of fear mongering is applied (the risk is always assessed and presented as more serious than it is). 34% of the respondents chose the option "I think that a strategy of concealment is applied" (the risk is always assessed and presented as far less serious than it is). Only 28% of the respondents opted "for a strategy of caution is applied" (the risk always has to be assessed and presented as a little bit more serious than it is).

These results lead us to the question which general strategy of security risk management is mainly applied by the security institutions in the Republic of North Macedonia. 23% of the respondents chose prevention by developing a separate security programme, while 10% opted for economic security protection, i.e. insuring valuables. 21% of the respondents did not support any of the offered options, and 25% chose a strategy that combines a security programme and insuring valuables. About 20% did not know or did not have an answer to the question.

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Instead of a conclusion

The character of the risk defined under the circumstances of globalisation and postmodern societies has an impact on the character of security risks in today's Macedonian society and state. Globalised and postmodern definitions of the character of risks as negative (security) risks have an impact on the definition of the character of risks as security risks in today's Macedonian society and state. The complex globalised and postmodern societal relations contribute to so-called privatisation of security risks in today's Macedonian society and state. As a result of modern globalised and postmodern changes in the character of risks, manufactured security risks are predominant over external security risks in today's Macedonian society and state.

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