

**POLARIZATION, SHIFTING BORDERS AND LIQUID GOVERNANCE: STUDIES ON TRANSFORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE OSCE REGION, EDITED ANJA MIHR, AND CHIARA PIEROBON. SPRINGER CHAM. XVII, 427 PP.**  
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**Abstract**

This book examines the dynamics of national and regional security in the age of *Zeitenwende* amid polarization and conflict management. Through a comparative analysis, the authors reveal the intricate problems of border dynamics and practice in cases of border disputes and conflicts in the member states of the OSCE. The authors offer their approaches on how to peacefully settle the disputed borders, which can be supported by the EU, the NATO and the OSCE. It can be of significant help in preventing security crises and conflicts. In this regard, a number of solutions that can affect the Russian-Ukraine war and the settlement of Russia-Ukraine relations are highlighted. From the author's approach, it becomes clear that various European countries and international organizations should play an active role in the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis and the strengthening of European security.

**Keywords:** war, peace, aggression, Ukraine, enlargement policy, European Union politics, global order, normative power, strategic autonomy, stabilitocracy.

The issues of polarization, shifting borders, governance and ensuring military security have interested politicians, philosophers and scientists almost from the very beginning of meaningful collective life of people. The formation of states on the European continent was accompanied by armed struggle of nations for survival, in connection with which there was an acute need to ensure protection from the threat of armed attack from outside. European scientists were engaged in the study of this problem, tried to determine the criteria for the fairness of the use of force, the law of war and defense, were engaged in a comprehensive study of wars in an attempt to develop a system of state security and a collective regional system of ensuring security, to minimize the consequences of war (Mihr 2024; Isakova 2024; Yalcin-Ispir 2024).

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Theories of polarization, management and provision of military security of borders, as we perceive it at the present stage in relation to state policy, were first introduced by European and American researchers in the field of international relations and implied a complex sphere of military-civil studies of strategy, technology, arms control. At the same time, it was exclusively about hard military security (Sapeha et al. 2024; Miljojkovic 2024). The development of technologies and the growth of interdependence of world processes, such as economic integration, the impact of environmental pollution on the territory of one state on the world climate, etc., led to an expansion of the range of challenges and threats to states and the entire world community (Kulesza 2024; Kurmanov 2024). In the context of globalization, the term 'international security' was developed; there was also a classification of the term 'security' by the breadth of coverage and spheres of life and a comprehensive approach to ensuring international security was developed. At the same time, researchers demonstrated different approaches to the role of military security in the context of ensuring international security.

Polarization, shifting borders and ongoing governance, studies of transformation and development in the OSCE region, as well as strategic security NATO and the EU are important elements of the international security system and basic security institutions in the Euro-Atlantic area. Almost from the very beginning of the transformation and development in the OSCE region, many intergovernmental organizations found themselves in the center of the process of transformation of the European security system, which implied qualitative changes in the elements, i.e. the main mechanisms of interaction and structure in the field of security on the European continent (Mihir and Pierobon 2024; Toktogazieva, Saniia. 2024). In this regard, a number of questions arise: what is the *modus vivendi* of the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO and the EU in the Euro-Atlantic area, given the cross-membership of most member states? How will this relationship be expressed in practice (*modus operandi*)? To what extent is it possible to distribute responsibilities and roles between the Council of Europe, the OSCE, NATO and the EU; how will the complementarity and interaction of these institutional pillars of the Euro-Atlantic area be ensured within the framework of highly contradictory and conflictual transatlantic relations?

In the book, the relevance of the study of the process of transformation of the European security system is determined by the need to assess the directions of its development, its causes and motivations of the main players. In addition, the dynamics of NATO development and transformation in themselves and the interaction of the EU and NATO as a whole create new institutional structures, new forms of cooperation and decision-making, which significantly affects the integration processes in Europe and the nature of transatlantic relations. Due to these circumstances, there is an increasing need to obtain objective knowledge about the factual side of this interaction.

Since the countries of the OSCE region view both organizations as key partners and partly competitors in the sphere of international cooperation on security issues and itself seeks to play an active role in the European international security system, the need to study the relationship between NATO and the EU at the present stage is dictated by the existing intensive contacts with each organization. The importance of the NATO and the EU for the countries of the OSCE region has increased especially

due to their expansion. In the context of modern wars and military conflicts, when Russia's relations with the United States, NATO and the EU, due to Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine and various circumstances, have found themselves at a confrontational stage, when, despite the existence of a treaty framework, institutions and cooperation mechanisms, the parties are again faced with a choice of the future nature of cooperation, studying the interaction of NATO and the EU becomes necessary for forming a policy towards not only each of the organizations separately. Moreover, Russia's war with Georgia in 2008, the Second Karabakh War in 2020, Russia's full-scale war against Ukraine since 2022, NATO and the EU have put forward proposals for a new comprehensive mechanism for European security, effectively raising the issue of revising the main parameters of the current security structure in the Euro-Atlantic area. We are talking about the resilience of the common security space, which may include both individual states and existing institutions. The new mechanism is designed to ensure the indivisibility of the security space and arms control in Europe. In this regard, it is also extremely important to understand the specifics of interaction between NATO and the EU, their institutional advantages and limitations in terms of the possibilities of achieving appropriate negotiating results under the new mechanism (Nakashidze 2024; Abeytia, Brito and Ojo 2024).

The subject of the book is specific aspects of polarization, border shifts and current governance, as well as studies of transformation and development in the OSCE, EU and NATO region. First, the declared goals and level of relations are considered; second, the means at the disposal of the EU and NATO in the institutional, military and financial spheres; third, specific examples of their practical interaction (Mihir and Pierobon 2024; Reznichuk 2024).

Based on the stated goals, the authors set themselves the following tasks:

- 1) To conduct a critical analysis of some theoretical approaches applicable to the topic of this study.
- 2) To identify the main stages of migration policy development in the OSCE region, early warning models in the OSCE, strategic security of NATO and the EU, models of border disputes among OSCE countries.
- 3) To analyze the officially declared nature and level of relations: how institutions formulated goals in relation to each other, how consistent are the existing definitions and whether they contain formal restrictions for the development of inter-organizational cooperation.
- 4) To examine the means that the OSCE, NATO and the EU have at their disposal in three main areas: institutional, military-political and financial, which is important for identifying the level of autonomy and/or dependence of one organization on the other.
- 5) To assess the rationality of human rights, as well as digital civil activism in Central Asia
- 6) To analyze the transformations of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine on the way to EU membership
- 7) To examine the mechanisms of European integration of Ukraine in the context of Russian aggression, which Germany, Italy, Poland, Estonia and Greece have

at their disposal with the support of Ukraine. Meanwhile, special attention is paid to the impartial position of Turkey regarding Russia's war against Ukraine.

- 8) The dilemma of proper governance of the 44-day Azerbaijani war against Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia.

Russia's war against Georgia in 2008, the Azerbaijani war against Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia since 2020 and the full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine since 2022 have become direct evidence of the crisis of international institutions and mechanisms for ensuring security, which were unable to prevent the large-scale militarization of Russia and Azerbaijan and the subsequent armed aggression against civilians. The inability of the OSCE, the EU, NATO and the UN to take timely adequate measures to resolve the conflict has become an important signal for all European countries that further degradation of the military-political dimension of European security could lead to the emergence of other armed conflicts on the continent that could destabilize the regional system of international relations (Dzebisashvili 2024; Zanatta and Alvi 2024). The question arose about the need to revise collective approaches to ensuring European security. In this regard, from a scientific point of view, it seems very timely and appropriate to conduct a conceptual understanding of approaches to ensuring European military security (Ambrosetti 2024; Kostakos 2024). It is necessary to assess the role of the force factor in modern international relations and determine the level of significance of military security in the structure of regional and European security (Đuković 2024; Lamçe 2024). It is necessary to consider the role of states, military-political blocs and international organizations in ensuring military security (Cupać 2024). It is necessary to emphasize the importance of existing international treaties and agreements in the field of strengthening European security and the need for their modernization, as well as the need to develop new agreements (Bruno and Fazio 2024; Pierobon 2024). Answers to these questions and consideration of the European security model require a comprehensive approach, implying an analysis of the existing documentary base, as well as the impact of political events taking place in Europe and statements by official representatives of European states on raising or lowering the level of security (Dyduch and Góra 2024; Kapp and Fix 2024). It is assumed that information on ongoing negotiations, study and creative rethinking of research in the field of international and European security will be analyzed, since these studies present different, sometimes alternative, conclusions and recommendations (Veebel and Ploom 2024; Manoli 2024). Only on the basis of an analysis of theoretical approaches, a comparison of the effectiveness of existing mechanisms in the field of ensuring security with modern military-political realities and needs is it possible to carry out a conceptual, not divorced from reality, understanding of the European system of ensuring military security, and to draw conclusions and recommendations regarding ensuring military security in Europe at the current stage of development.

The book examines the main parameters, institutions and mechanisms of the system of ensuring human and military security in Europe, their role and effectiveness; identifies current problems in ensuring European security and makes recommendations for their solution. In this sense, the evolution of the theory of ensuring military security

is studied, on the basis of which an assessment is given of the current state of military, regional, international and European security.

A comparative analysis of the modern architecture of military security in Europe is carried out, its strengths and weaknesses are identified both in the European space and in the South Caucasus and Central Asia. The authors determined the role and prospects of the UN, OSCE, EU and NATO in ensuring European security, taking into account the potential of these organizations, the accumulated experience in this area, the instruments operating within their framework, their ability to take into account the interests of all European states.

The authors consider it relevant to strengthen the existing agreements and arrangements in the field of ensuring military security in Europe, analyze their implementation, and present possible recommendations for increasing their effectiveness or the need for modernization. Based on the study, present possible recommendations for increasing the effectiveness of the model of ensuring European military security, which should be adapted to modern realities.

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### **Conflict of interests**

The author declares no ethical issues or conflicts of interest in this research.

### **Ethical standards**

The author affirms this research did not involve human subjects.

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