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Edited by Jakub Olchowski



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Reviewers:

Prof. Olena Dobrzhanska, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv
Dr. Justyna Olędzka, University of Białystok, Centre for East European
Studies University of Warsaw

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Résumé

Polish-Ukrainian military cooperation is complex and complicated, just like Polish-Ukrainian relations in general. Throughout the history of these two countries, there have been many conflicts and fights, often dramatic and influencing mutual aversion, but there have also been alliances and joint struggles, usually with a common enemy, which has generally been Russia in its various incarnations. Russia has been the external factor that has significantly shaped Polish-Ukrainian relations, trying to prevent rapprochement between these nations.

Currently, it is Russia and its policy that is the main reason that military cooperation between Poland and Ukraine is developing intensively; and despite the difficult past, the emphasis is primarily on the connecting elements and common heritage, which does not mean that mutual grievances have been eliminated – they still influence and will continue to influence relations between these nations. This positive collaboration requires demanding work and good will on both sides.

Tangible proof of the developing military alliance between Poland and Ukraine is the establishment of a multinational brigade consisting of soldiers from Lithuania, Poland and Ukraine. The process of creating the brigade required many arrangements at the political level, but the unit is now an important signal to the international environment as well as a significant element of regional partnership.

LITPOLUKRBRIG also has a symbolic meaning – it refers to the historical traditions of cooperation between the nations, contributing to overcoming mutual stereotypes and prejudices.

The brigade also functions strictly in the military dimension, participating in many international trainings, which is important especially due to the presence of a component from Ukraine in the brigade structures, i.e. a country that is not a NATO member. In a broader perspective, it is an element of NATO-Ukraine cooperation.

Despite various discrepancies and difficulties, joint training involving the two states has been developing since the 1990s, and Polish and Ukrainian soldiers have also participated in many international operations, including under the aegis of NATO, e.g. in 2000-2010 co-creating a joint battalion of peacekeepers in Kosovo.

Polish-Ukrainian training intensified after 2014, when Ukraine implemented extensive reforms of its armed forces, including training them according to Western standards.

Collaboration in the field of cybersecurity is gaining importance. This is due to the ongoing process of the digitisation of many aspects of life, including the functioning of state structures, which makes them vulnerable to cyber-attacks – in particular since the main opponent, Russia, con-

ducts hybrid activities on a large scale, using cyberspace. Both Poland and Ukraine are aware of this and are trying to build resilience, e.g. at the level of security strategies.

With regard to Ukraine, Russia had repeatedly launched attacks on infrastructure, e.g. on Ukrainian public and government institutions in February 2022, which, as it turned out, was a prelude to military aggression. Although such attacks and actions directed (albeit on a smaller scale) also against Poland did not result in significant losses, they are nevertheless important in the context of the psychological impact and constitute a warning for the future.

Polish-Ukrainian cooperation in this area has great development potential, considering that Ukraine has significant experience in counteracting Russian cyberspace activities, and Poland, as a NATO member, has access to information and know-how – both states could coordinate their activities in this regard (as Ukraine and Lithuania are already doing).



Introduction

The aim of this Policy Paper is to outline the topic of Polish-Ukrainian military cooperation in its various dimensions. The subject is undoubtedly worthy of attention, if only because of the complexity of Polish-Ukrainian relations, which remain burdened with many mutual claims.

What is important and should be emphasised is that most of the texts in this Policy Paper, written by experts from Poland and Ukraine, were written just before Russia's open aggression against Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022 and introduced Europe and the world to a new stage in which the international order will be shaped, symbolically ending the post-cold war era.

This does not mean, however, that these texts have become obsolete. On the contrary, they seem to have gained momentum, summing up a certain stage of military cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. Russia's war against Ukraine has changed the conditions and rules of the game and will shape international security for a very long time, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Thus, Polish-Ukraini-

an “cooperation” has taken on a new meaning, not only from the point of view of these two countries.

The publication contains four texts. In the first, Jakub Olchowski outlines the complicated history of the Polish-Ukrainian alliance, pointing out that historical conditions as well as external interference, especially from Russia, had a significant impact on Polish-Ukrainian relations, including in the military dimension.

In the second part, Tomasz Karliński presents the genesis and functioning of a worldwide unique military unit created by three countries (and referring to historical traditions): the multinational Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian brigade.

The next part, by Dariusz Materniak, is devoted to the training of the Polish and Ukrainian armed forces, which has been developing for many years. The threads from the previous parts appear here, but also the correct conclusion that the turning point was 2014, when both countries clearly realised the real – and growing – threat they both faced. There are also prophetic words: that in 2022, good relations will probably continue. Writing these words, the author did not yet know how much and under what circumstances this relationship would be intensified.

In the last part, colleagues from Kyiv, Sergiy Gerasymchuk and Mykhailo Drapak, analyses how the two countries have been working together in a particularly important field: cybersecurity. In the 21st century, it is cyberspace that is becoming one of the key battlefields, especially in the face of an opponent such as Russia, which works in this field both in the “hard” dimension, carrying out cyber-attacks on infrastructure, and in the “soft” dimension, affecting emotions and minds.

This short study only signals and draws attention to certain issues, but it is a good start and a step in the right direction. In the context of the fundamental changes in the international security system, especially affecting Ukraine and, to a large extent, Poland, military cooperation between the two countries is an urgent topic that needs analysis and a development strategy.

Jakub Olchowski



Jakub Olchowski

History and Determinants

The history of Polish-Ukrainian relations in the military dimension is complex and complicated – just like the history of relations between the Polish and Ukrainian nations. Also affecting this history is the proximity and influence of Germany, but most of all, for centuries, of Russia. In these relations there were both periods of cooperation and hostility – this applies to both Polish-Ukrainian relations in general and to strictly military relations between the two countries.

The results of this complicated history have been mutual prejudices, stereotypes and grievances, which have long been permanently embedded in the consciousness of both nations – and to some extent they are still alive (which Russia has been using for centuries as *divide et impera* instruments in order to stir up conflict between nations and states, trying to take advantage of them).

Paradoxically, Poles and Ukrainians do have a strong bond, as Ivan Franko, one of the most eminent Ukrainian poets and writers, noted in the 19th century: “In the entire Slavdom there are no two nations, that they were tied by

knots in so many ways, political and spiritual, and yet they still avoided one another as the Poles and Ukrainians.”

This began to change significantly, in the general consciousness (of Poles, especially) only in the 21st century, largely due to Russia's policy – its neo-imperial ambitions are considered a threat by Poles and Ukrainians alike – and both nations have experienced them many times in the past.

The Commonwealth period

The beginnings of “military relations” can be found in the so-called Kyiv expedition of 1018, during which the Polish king Bolesław Chrobry (the Brave) took Kyiv, and for many years there were fights between Poland and Kievan Rus. However, these were mainly conflicts over dynastic ambitions, typical of the feudal era (with the Germans playing an important role in them).

Real military cooperation began several centuries later, in the 16th century. Most of the Ukrainian lands were within the borders of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, also called the “Commonwealth of Both Nations”), thus their inhabitants became the subjects of the king of Poland.

In the eastern part of these lands, in the steppes on the Dnieper, a specific social group developed – the Cossacks (or more precisely the Zaporozhian Cossacks). They were “free people”, who were basically farmers but organized, with a military structure and famous for their combat skills and bravery. Their military efficiency was developed during the constant battles with the Tatars, Russia and during plundering expeditions to Crimea and Turkish lands (they even reached Constantinople). In fact, they defended the eastern

borders of Poland, although their rallies also caused numerous tensions in Polish-Turkish relations.

The skills of the Cossacks were used by the Commonwealth, which established the so-called “Registry”, i.e. Cossack units formally in the service of the Polish king. However, the Cossacks were dissatisfied with the limited number of “registered Cossacks”, although this was mostly because of the financial shortcomings of the royal treasury, not a lack of good will.

Also, the attitude of the Polish nobility, who quickly colonised the Ukrainian lands (the attitude of the local nobles, polonizing themselves, was similar), including treating the Cossacks as ordinary peasants and favouring Catholicism, led to increasing tensions.

These tensions fomented a series of more and more bloody rebellions and uprisings, and more and more brutal suppression by magnates and royal troops. The most famous of these uprisings, initiated in 1648 by Bohdan Khmelnytsky, was the eighth consecutive Cossack rebellion, which spread throughout Ukraine and went down in history, dividing Poles and Ukrainians.

For the former, it became a symbol of Ukrainian disloyalty and cruelty, for the latter, an important element of the founding myth of Ukrainian statehood. Even today, the Cossack legend is an essential part of the national identity of Ukraine. Importantly, it was formed not so much on the basis of anti-Polish sentiments as anti-Russian – it was Russia that finally pacified the Cossacks.

In 1654, the Cossacks, hoping for more autonomy than simply within the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, signed the Pereiaslav Agreement with Moscow, under which a large

part of Ukrainian territory was placed under Russia's sovereignty. In fact, it was the beginning of the Russification of Ukraine, which continued over subsequent centuries. In 1709, Peter the Great liquidated the Cossack para-state (Zaporozhian Sich), and in 1775 Catherine the Great disbanded the remains of the Cossacks' organization and autonomy and incorporated its territory into the Russian province of Novorossiia¹. Despite the fact that this period brought with it mutual Polish-Ukrainian stereotypes and prejudices (the conviction of "a civilisation mission" on the one hand and memories about oppression on the other), it was not only marked by hostility, but also good relations, which is more and more often recalled today.

Many times the Cossacks and the Poles fought shoulder to shoulder against the Tatars, Turkey, Sweden and Russia. The most glaring and famous example is the Battle of Khotyn in 1621 in which the combined Polish-Cossack forces successfully opposed the twice as numerous Turkish troops. The Cossacks were led in this battle by hetman Petro Konashevych-Sahaidachny, one of the most distinguished Cossack commanders, who fought together with his Cossacks in multiple Polish-Turkish and Polish-Russian wars. Another example, though going deeper into the past, is the figure of Konstantin Ivanovich Ostrozhsky – a Ruthenian prince (knyaz) and magnate, Grand Hetman of Lithuania, who commanded the Commonwealth armies in many successful campaigns against the Tatars, Muscovy and Turkey. In 1514 he crushed Russian forces in the famous Battle of

¹ Therefore, Vladimir Putin claims Eastern Ukraine to be a part of Russia.

Orsha, which is remembered to this day in Poland, Ukraine and Lithuania.

At the end of the 18th century, Poland ceased to exist as a sovereign state, falling victim to partitions, and Ukraine was entirely taken over by the Russian Empire and subjected to intense Russification. It is possible that history could have taken a different course if two treaties had entered into force: The Treaty of Zboriv (1649) and The Treaty of Hadiach (1658). They granted much autonomy and privileges to Ukraine and the Cossacks and in fact assumed a transformation of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth into a Polish-Lithuanian-Ruthenian Commonwealth ("Commonwealth of Three Nations" instead of "Both"). Unfortunately, the lack of political will and the willingness to reach a compromise on both sides prevented the implementation of these plans. Mutual prejudices and a sense of injustice prevented this from happening as well as the resulting spiral of hatred and retaliation (e.g. in retaliation for the murders of the Polish nobility and clergy during the Khmelnytsky Uprising, caused largely by the arbitrariness of the Polish magnates. Poles bloodily pacified Ukraine, which in turn resulted in a cruel massacre of all Polish prisoners after the Battle of Batoh in 1652, etc.). Mutual aversion and distrust between Poles and Ukrainians influenced their relations for generations to come. As Polish writer Henryk Sienkiewicz put it, "Hatred grew into hearts and poisoned the blood of brothers."

World Wars and the inter-war period

The First World War was an opportunity for many nations living within great empires to gain or, as in the case of Poland, regain their subjectivity and sovereignty. This also

applied to the Ukrainians, whose national consciousness, despite the pressure from Russia, was steadily developing.

However, this was in contradiction not only to the interests of Russia, but also of Poland, which was striving to regain the pre-partition borders, thus also covering a large part of Ukraine's territory. The paradoxical dichotomy made itself felt again: hostility accompanied cooperation.

In 1918–1919 there was a Polish-Ukrainian war for Eastern Galicia, inhabited by Poles and Ukrainians alike. One of the key episodes of this war was the fight for Lviv, a city of symbolic importance for both nations. The parties to the conflict were the reborn Polish state and the West Ukrainian Peoples' Republic (created under a German protectorate) – clearly anti-Polish.

There was also another Ukrainian state organism at that time – the Ukrainian People's Republic (UPR), and in the face of a common threat from Russia (both Bolsheviks and “the Whites”), an alliance between the UPR and Poland (known as the Piłsudski-Petliura Treaty) was formed in 1920. As a result of the treaty, the combined Polish and Ukrainian troops fought together in the Polish-Soviet War in 1919–1921. On 9 May 1920, there was a common Polish-Ukrainian military parade in Kyiv, retaken from the Bolsheviks. Another important episode of this war was the heroic defence of Zamość against Budyonny's Cavalry Army, led by the 6th Sich Rifle Division, commanded by Col. Marko Bezruchko.

Polish authorities at that time understood the meaning of an independent Ukraine for Poland's security. However, the idea of establishing a Ukrainian state failed. In March of 1921 Poland signed a peace treaty with Soviet Russia. One of the results of this was Poland's withdrawal of support for

the UPR (the Polish delegation was dominated by right-wing politicians who rejected Piłsudski's federal concept). That was a significant disappointment for those Ukrainians who had opted for an alliance with Poland and again affected Polish-Ukrainian relations. Additionally, thousands of Ukrainian soldiers were detained in Polish internment camps.

Finally, a large part of Ukraine again became part of the Polish state. Ukrainians accounted for around 15% of Poland's population, and national relations remained tense. On the one hand, this was caused by the defeat of Ukrainian ambitions for independence, and on the other hand, by Poland's policy towards minorities.

In 1929 the Organisation of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) was established – and was supported politically and financially by Germany. The OUN used terrorism to achieve its political goals. For example, Polish politician Tadeusz Hołówko was murdered in 1931 and Bronisław Pieracki, Minister of Internal Affairs, in 1934 – his death led to the establishment of the Bereza Kartuska Prison by the Polish government, which would be used to detain political opponents, including communists, right-wing politicians and Ukrainian nationalists – this could only worsen national tensions. Important to note is that the OUN concentrated on eliminating, first of all, both Polish and Ukrainian supporters of good relations and mutual understanding. The aim was to open a wider possibility to radicalise Ukrainians.

Some part of the Polish political scene as well as Ukrainian organisations (UNDO – the Ukrainian National Democratic Alliance) still called for an alliance. Nevertheless, relations worsened systematically, including in the cultural and religious spheres. The peak of this process was

the 1938 “polonisation and revindication action” – about 200 Orthodox churches were destroyed or transformed into Catholic churches, many Orthodox believers were forced to convert to Catholicism. As a result, nationalist and anti-Polish moods among Ukrainians in Poland grew, culminating in WWII atrocities, known widely as the “Volhynian slaughter” in which about 100 thousand Poles and 15 thousand Ukrainians were murdered. There was an evident Polish-Ukrainian conflict, with a social, ethnic and religious background; however, full responsibility for the cruel massacre is on the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (Ukr. UPA – *Українська повстанська армія*). Today the attitude towards the UPA is one of the key barriers in Polish-Ukrainian relations. For Poles, the UPA is a criminal and genocidal organisation; many Ukrainians choose to memorialise the UPA as “fighters for Ukraine’s independence” (and this divergence is extensively used by Russian propaganda). In retaliation, in 1947–1950, Poland conducted “Operation Vistula”, forcibly resettling about 140 thousand people, mainly Ukrainians, from south-eastern provinces of post-war Poland to the west of the country.

As usual, also during WWII and after the war, there was incidental Polish-Ukrainian cooperation – the most notorious case was a joint attack against Soviet-backed Polish communist institutions in the town of Hrubieszów (May 1946), conducted by the UPA and the Polish anti-communist resistance.

It must be emphasised, however, that Polish-Ukrainian relations, regarding their military dimension, were very complex in this period. As an example, during WWII, Ukrainians served in the Polish Army in 1939, in the Red

Army, in the Wehrmacht, in German auxiliary units, in the SS-Galizien Division, in the UPA, in the Polish Armed Forces in the West and in the Ukrainian National Army. Another illustration of this complexity is the story of Pavlo Shandruk – he was born in 1889 in Volhynia, served during WWI in the Russian tsarist army, then he fought the Bolsheviks hand in hand with Poles; after that he was interned by the Poles. In 1926 he joined the Polish Army; in 1939 he commanded an infantry brigade, and he saved the unit when it was surrounded by the Germans. In 1940–1944 he worked with both the Polish Underground State and Ukrainian activists. In 1945 he became the commander of the Ukrainian National Army and was able to save his men from Soviet captivity (otherwise, they would have all been executed). Despite this, he was still disrespected and criticised by the OUN, by some Polish politicians – and by the Soviets. That criticism from the Polish side did not change, even after he was awarded in 1961 by Gen. Władysław Anders with the highest Polish military decoration, The War Order of Virtuti Militari. He died in 1979, forgotten and in poverty.

The Cold War Period

After WWII Polish-Ukrainian relations were shaped by communist propaganda, both in Poland and the Soviet Union. There was no Ukrainian statehood, and the very word “Ukrainian” was perceived as anti-Soviet, anti-Polish and basically “nationalistic”. This propaganda effectively strengthened and preserved anti-Ukrainian prejudices and stereotypes in Poland as well as anti-Polish ones in Ukraine. Also, Ukrainians were consistently accused of collaborating with the German Nazis – this is clearly reflected in today's

Russian propaganda and in many anti-Ukrainian narratives. Any change of these mutual prejudices was hardly possible; despite the geographical proximity, the “socialist, brotherly nations” were carefully isolated from each other.

Independent Ukraine

As a result, after Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991, Poland was the first state to recognise this declaration, but at a social level anti-Ukrainian stereotypes and prejudices were so strong and deeply rooted that according to public opinion polls in 1991, only 9% of Poles had sympathy for Ukrainians (38% felt reluctance). A decade later the numbers were, respectively, 19% and 49%. This only started to change in the 21st century, especially after 2004 (the “Orange Revolution”) and 2014 (the annexation of Crimea, the “Revolution of Dignity”) – as direct relations between the two nations became more common and, again, a common “traditional” enemy united Poles and Ukrainians. After the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, more than 90% of Poles support Ukraine and Ukrainians – a similar attitude toward Poland and Poles is expressed in Ukraine now, which is unprecedented in the history of relations between the two neighbours.

When it comes to military cooperation, it was visibly re-established as early as the 1990s. Firstly, the framework for this alliance was delivered by NATO's initiative: the Partnership for Peace. Next, Polish and Ukrainian military units participated in peacekeeping operations in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo) – in 2000–2010 the Polish-Ukrainian Peace Force Battalion (POLUKRBAT) was part of the KFOR mission. Soldiers from both countries were

also present in Iraqi and Afghanistan. They also participate in NATO exercises and train together, especially with the use of the Yavoriv Training Centre in Ukraine. Also, Polish soldiers, along with colleagues from other NATO allies, have been training the Ukrainian military for many years.

As indicated above, a characteristic of Polish-Ukrainian relations (including their military aspect) is the long history of periods of cooperation and hostility. Furthermore, there are still a number of unexplained and unforgiven mutual grievances. Nevertheless, there is also a growing consciousness on both sides that in the face of a common enemy, Poland and Ukraine may be much stronger if they work together (which may be ironically called, by the way, one of Putin's policy "successes").

It is worth mentioning that hetman Konashevych-Sahaidachny, known for his merits regarding Polish-Ukrainian partnerships, is one of the most respected figures in the Ukrainian military, and the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade (LITPOLUKRBRIG – see Chapter 2) was named after hetman Ostrozhsky. Also, instead of focusing on the dark sides of mutual relations, the heritage and legacy of the Piłsudski–Petliura agreement is now being emphasised. And what was unthinkable even two decades ago – the figures of a Polish Hussar and a Ukrainian Cossack displayed together, as brothers in arms, not enemies – has come to pass.



Tomasz Karliński

Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade

Introduction

Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG is a multinational unit consisting of subunits from the Lithuanian, Polish, and Ukrainian Armed Forces. The Agreement on its creation was signed on the 19th of September 2014 in Warsaw. The Brigade was finally formed in the fall of 2015.

Establishing the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade is part of the continuous process of consistent and long-term military cooperation between Poland, Ukraine, and Lithuania. This model of cooperation has previously been carried out within the framework of the Polish-Ukrainian Battalion (POLUKRBAT) and Lithuanian-Polish Battalion (LITPOLBAT), which military units existed in the years 1998-2010 and 1997-2008, respectively. From 2000 to 2010, the subunits of POLUKRBAT (reinforced by a Lithuanian platoon) took part in the KFOR operation in Kosovo. As

for LITPOLBAT, in 2000 it was added to the EU's Quick Response Forces.

On the 14th of June 2007, during an EU Defence Ministers' meeting, the Lithuanian, Polish, and Ukrainian ministers agreed to create a multinational unit, the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian peacekeeping battalion LITPOLUKRBAT. In the fall of 2008, the proposed unit type was specified as a brigade.

The Ministers of Defence of the establishing countries endorsed the agreement on forming the trilateral Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG in Warsaw on the 19th of September 2014. The Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Poland, and the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on the creation of a joint military brigade was issued, and on the 24th of July 2015, the Technical Arrangement was signed in Lviv (Ukraine). It focused on detailed aspects of the joint military unit LITPOLUKRBRIG and its command.

On the 25th of January 2016, Antoni Macierewicz, the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Poland, Juozas Olekas, the Minister of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, and General of the Army of Ukraine, Stepan Poltorak, the Minister of Defence of Ukraine, inaugurated the joint Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG at the official opening ceremony in Lublin, Poland. The ceremony was held at the [Army] Headquarters, with soldiers from Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine aligned in one formation in front of the ministers and distinguished guests. This date is recognized as the day of LITPOLUKRBRIG achieving the Initial Operational Capabilities. After almost a yearlong path of professional development and

intensive training, LITPOLUKRBRIG took the Certification Exercise and achieved Full Operational Capabilities. In the period from the 8th to 16th of December 2016, the Brigade Command and Headquarters of certain affiliated units participated in the Computer-Assisted Command Post Exercise Common Challenge-16. During the Exercise, the Multinational Certification Team Certified the Brigade Command on the ability to lead assigned troops through Crisis-Response and Humanitarian Assistance Operations. This was validated with the Letter of Certification signed by the Minister of National Defence of Poland, Antoni Macierewicz, the Minister of National Defence of Lithuania, Raimundas Karoblis, and the Deputy Minister of Defence of Ukraine, Ihor DOLGOV, on 15th December 2016. The verification finished on 24th January 2017.

On 5th October 2017, the Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade LITPOLUKRBRIG was named after the Grand Hetman, Kostiantyn Ostrogski, who became the Patron of the Brigade. The Grand Hetman of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, Kostiantyn Ostrogski, was born in 1460 in the Ostrog Castle, in the Volyn region. Kostiantyn Ostrogski died in 1530 and was buried in the Pechersk Lavra of Kyiv (Kyiv Cave Monastery). The Grand Hetman Ostrogski successfully led his forces against the aggression of Tatars and Muscovians. He fought 33 battles, of which 31 were victorious. The most significant victory was achieved in 1514 at the battle of Orsha. During this battle, the joint military forces of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland defeated the Muscovy Army which was significantly larger. Kostiantyn Ostrogski was a talented and successful military leader. He

was and has remained a symbol of unity among the nations of Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine.

The Brigade Headquarters and staff are located in Lublin, Poland. The LITPOLUKRBRIG battalions are held on standby in their home countries and deploy in the form of LITPOLUKRBRIG in case a decision is made to activate the Brigade or any of its elements. The LITPOLUKRBRIG is made up of international staff, three battalions, and specialized units. Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine each assign a manoeuvre battalion and the LITPOLUKRBRIG staff. Poland additionally designates and assigns combat and combat service support units to sustain the LITPOLUKRBRIG Command and the manoeuvre battalions. Representatives of Poland, Ukraine, and Lithuania are assigned to the positions of LITPOLUKRBRIG Commander, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff on a three-year rotating basis. The current LITPOLUKRBRIG commander is Colonel Jarosław Mokrzycki (Polish Armed Forces). Second in command is Deputy Commander Colonel Mindaugas Statkus (Lithuanian Armed Forces). Lieutenant Colonel Oleksandr Lunov (Ukrainian Armed Forces) has been assigned as the Chief of Staff of the LITPOLUKRBRIG.

Affiliated units

Grand Duchess Birutė Uhlan Battalion (LTU A)

The Grand Duchess Birutė Uhlan Battalion is stationed in the town of Alytus in Lithuania. The Battalion is part of the largest unit of the Lithuanian Land Forces – the Mechanized Infantry Brigade “Iron Wolf”. The Battalion was christened on the 1st of January 2014 and continues

the traditions of the Lithuanian army unit operating in the years 1926-1939. The Battalion gradually and successively modernizes its armaments and equipment by introducing advanced types of wheeled and tracked vehicles as well as small arms, anti-tank systems, 60 mm and 120 mm mortars, and night and low-visibility operations equipment into service. The soldiers of the Battalion have participated in various international operations. In the years 2001-2003, the Battalion dispatched a platoon-strength unit to serve as part of the multinational battalion in which Poland and Ukraine also participated under the “Joint Guardian” operation in Kosovo. A number of tasks have been completed during the three rotations in which the Battalion soldiers have participated, including protecting various objects, making patrols as well as rapid-response operations. In the years 2003-2006, the Battalion participated in the “Iraqi Freedom” operation during which it was stationed in Al-Hillah, in the Polish area of responsibility, where it was engaged in, e.g., support and training of the local security services, primarily the Iraqi police force. In the years 2008-2012, the soldiers of the Battalion participated in the ISAF operation in Afghanistan where they were primarily involved in the operations of the Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in the Ghor province, from where they supported local authorities in ensuring security and stability during the realized activities.

The representatives of the Battalion participated twice in the operations of the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine along with instructors from the USA, Canada, and Poland, during which they shared their experience with the soldiers of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

5th Podhale Riflemen Battalion from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The 5th Podhale Riflemen Battalion was formed in 1994. The unit is stationed in Przemyśl and the Battalion is part of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The Battalion inherited and continues the traditions of the 5th Podhale Riflemen Regiment of the 22nd Mountain Infantry Division and the Podhale Riflemen Regiment of the Home Army. The Battalion is designed for completing tasks under a brigade-level unit or independently. It can carry out operations in regular or low-visibility conditions and in various climate zones for which it is trained and prepared. The unit has participated in numerous peacekeeping and stabilization operations realized abroad, including Kosovo, where, since the July of 2000, the unit has operated as part of the Kosovo Force under the Polish-Ukrainian Peace Force Battalion POLUKR-BAT. The soldiers of the Battalion have also participated in missions in Iraq where they were engaged in operations under the Multinational Division Central-South and during the ISAF operation in Afghanistan. The Battalion also participates in the exercises carried out jointly with units from, e.g., Lithuania and Ukraine such as Anakonda, Maple Arch, or Common Challenge. From 2015 to 2019 (for the first half-year), the 5th Podhale Riflemen Battalion formed the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade and was the main combat battalion of the Polish Army. From the second half of 2019, the main Polish combat battalion was appointed to the 3rd Mechanized Battalion from Zamość.

3rd Mechanized Battalion from 19th Mechanized Brigade (POL A)

The 3rd Mechanized Battalion was formed in 2008 and is stationed in Zamość. The soldiers of the battalion have participated in, e.g., training undertakings organized in the interest of Ukraine and realized under the Joint Multinational Training Group-Ukraine in Javoryv near Lviv. Since 2019, the battalion has been subordinated to the 19th Mechanized Brigade, under which the battalion realizes training courses. The battalion also undertakes training within the newly formed Brigade and under the 18th Mechanized Division. The 3rd Mechanized Battalion has been an affiliated unit of LITPOLUKRBRIG since 2019.

1st Air Assault Battalion from 80 Separate Air Assault Brigade (UKR A)

The 1st Air Assault Battalion is part of the 80th Air Assault Brigade of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The unit is stationed in Lviv in Ukraine. The 80th Airborne Assault Brigade was formed in 2013 on the foundations of the air-mobile regiment.

The Battalion is equipped, prepared, and trained to carry out operations utilizing parachute and helicopter-borne landing. It maintains a high level of readiness for rapid redeployment and becoming engaged in a number of activities, both during peacekeeping and combat operations. Since 2014, the Battalion soldiers have frequently participated in operations under Anti-Terrorist/Joint Forces Operations in the Eastern part of Ukraine. In the spring of 2014, they were engaged in tasks related to securing the Ukrainian national border in Sumy and Poltava oblasts. In April of 2014, they participated in the fighting in the area of Slovyansk, and in

July of the same year, in the operations aimed at encircling Lugansk. Towards the end of August, they were engaged in fighting for the airport in Lugansk.

14th Self-Propelled Artillery Battalion from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The 4th Self-Propelled Artillery Battalion was formed in 1993. Initially, the unit operated under the 14th Armoured Brigade and, after the reorganization, it became a part of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The battalion inherits and continues the traditions of the 14th Anti-amour Artillery Battalion of Jaroslaw, and the unit is stationed in the town of Jaroslaw. The Battalion is tasked with providing fire support to the units of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The equipment and hardware of the Battalion include, for instance, 122 mm self-propelled howitzers 2S1 Gvozdika.

21st Air Defence Battalion from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The 21st Air Defence Battalion was formed in 1993. Since 2008, it has been stationed in the town of Jaroslaw. The main task of the Battalion is to provide air defence for the subunits of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The Battalion is equipped with various hardware including short-range Grom shoulder-fired missile launchers, ZU-23-2 Hibneryt antiaircraft guns, ZDPSR Sola radiolocation stations, and Poprad self-propelled anti-aircraft systems.

16th Military Engineering Battalion from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The 16th Military Engineering Battalion was formed in 1945 as the 47th Military Engineering Battalion. When it inherited the traditions of the 16th Military Engineering Battalion of the 16th Pomeranian Infantry Division, it was reorganized into the 16th Military Engineering Battalion. In the years 1951-2011, it was stationed in Tczew. Since 2011, it has been under the authority of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade and thus it was relocated from Tczew and stationed in Nisko. The main responsibility of the unit is to realize various tasks related to engineering support, including terrain reconnaissance, erecting and demolishing engineering obstacles, erecting fortifications, preparing and constructing roads and bridges, mine clearance, constructing helipads, and other related activities.

21st Logistics Battalion from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The 21st Logistics Battalion was formed in 2011 and is stationed in Rzeszow. The 21st Supply Company and 21st Repair Company were incorporated into the 21st Logistics Battalion. The unit inherits and continues the traditions of the 2nd Podhale Riflemen Regiment. The main task of the Battalion is ensuring the security of the logistics of the Command and the units of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade by, for instance, supplying the units with water, provisions, ammunition, ordnance, uniforms, and equipment as well as by providing assistance in the form of technical, repair, and evacuation teams, and medical assistance.

CBRN Platoon from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear platoon is a part of the Command Battalion of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The 21st Battalion was formed in 1993. The unit is stationed in Rzeszow. The responsibilities of the chemical platoon include detecting contamination with chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear substances, materials, and weapons.

Reconnaissance Company from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade (POL A)

The Reconnaissance Company is part of the 21st Command Battalion of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The unit is tasked with carrying out battlefield reconnaissance for units comprising the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. The equipment and hardware available to the company include, e.g., BRDM-2 reconnaissance vehicles, grenade launchers, and 60 mm light mortars.

Geographical Section from Military Geography Branch (POL A)

The 19th Independent Geographical Unit is an organizational unit established in order to carry out tasks relating to geographical security. It was formed in 2003. The unit is stationed in Leszno. The responsibilities of the unit include, e.g., providing information concerning the area of operations, the realization of plans pertaining to geographical security, compiling military-geographical information as well as collecting and processing information concerning terrain.

HUMINT Team from 9th Reconnaissance Regiment (POL A)

The unit was formed in 1966 and currently, since 1995, has been stationed at the garrison in Lidzbark Warminski. The regiment is a reconnaissance unit designed for conducting general army reconnaissance and specialized reconnaissance for the Operations Commander under various combat operations within the national territory. It can also dispatch specialized Human Intelligence task groups to realize tasks outside the national borders and is capable of cooperating in operations in the event of a crisis.

MINI UAV Section from 12th Base of UAS (POL A)

The 12th Unmanned Aerial Vehicles Base was established in 2015 in Mirosławiec as the first unit of this kind in Poland. The unit is tasked with conducting visual reconnaissance in times of peace, crisis, or war through the use of unmanned aerial vehicles by collecting, processing, and analysing data. The unit is equipped with the Orbiter unmanned aircraft.

Military Police Company from Minsk Mazowiecki (POL A)

The Military Police Specialized Unit in Minsk Mazowiecki was formed in 2005. The Military Police Company HQ is also located in Minsk Mazowiecki. Since 2006, the soldiers serving in this unit have participated in peacekeeping and stabilization missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iraq, Syria, and the Central African Republic. The main task of the Military Police Specialized Unit is to provide support to the policing operations of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland as well as to complete various tasks when acting under multinational “military police” subunits. The tasks of the Military Police during the realized peacekeeping opera-

tions include, e.g., those tasks related to preserving public order and security in the area of operations, counselling in the affairs pertaining to refugees, and conducting investigative procedures related to committed offences.

Brigade PSYOPS Support Group from Central PSYOPS Group Bydgoszcz (POL A)

The Central PSYOPS Group was formed in 2002. The unit is stationed in Bydgoszcz and is tasked with conducting Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) on the battlefield and during peace support operations on the operational and tactical levels as well as with detaching specialized psychological support elements to serve with NATO forces. The soldiers from the unit have participated in numerous operations abroad incl. operations in Kosovo, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

Brigade CIMIC Support from training Military Training Centre for Foreign Operations Kielce (POL A)

The Military Training Centre for Foreign Operations was established in 2011 in Kielce on the foundation of the Military Training Centre for Peace Support Operations and the Central Civil-Military Cooperation Support Group. The main goal of the activities carried out by the unit is to prepare soldiers for serving abroad during multinational peacekeeping and stabilization operations as well as for conducting activities in the field of Civilian-Military Cooperation (CIMIC). The Centre realizes its goals by, for instance, engaging in the educational activity in the field of preparing soldiers for completing Civilian-Military Cooperation tasks, and also by providing training in the form of Mobile Training Teams.

Liaison Element from 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade HQ (POL A)

The Land Liaison Element (LLE) constitutes a part of the S-3 section of the staff of the 21st Podhale Riflemen Brigade. It is stationed in Rzeszow. Land Liaison Element (LLE) realizes tasks related to air support under cooperation with LITPOLUKRBRIG and its affiliated units in the area of responsibility of the Brigade.

Headquarter Battalion of 19 Mechanized Brigade (POL A)

The Headquarter Battalion of the 19th Mechanized Brigade was formed in 2019. The unit is stationed in Lublin. The battalion is tasked with providing logistical support to the Command of LITPOLUKRBRIG including current operations and training initiatives. These goals are realized through organizing and maintaining command and communication systems as well as through creating proper conditions for the command of the Multinational Brigade to complete its tasks.

LITPOLUKRBRIG Command

The LITPOLUKRBRIG Command is organized in accordance with the NATO standards and divided into the Brigade Command and the Staff Group. Representatives of Poland, Ukraine, and Lithuania are assigned to the positions of LITPOLUKRBRIG Commander, Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff on a three-year rotating basis. The Staff is divided into three branches with each branch headed by the Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) and divided into sections. Each section is headed by the Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS).

Deputy Chief of Staff (DCOS) is first in the chain of command among DCOS Operation and DCOS Support. DCOS

supports the Chief of Staff in every way and replaces him in case of unavailability. The Deputy Chief of Staff exercises command over the Information Management Cell and Visit & Protocol Cell.

Information Management Cell manages official incoming and outgoing correspondence, disseminates and stores all of the information within the Brigade, and develops the LITPOLUKRBRIG Knowledge Management Plan.

Visit & Protocol Cell arranges, coordinates, and facilitates all military and civilian visits to LITPOLUKRBRIG. In the cell, a Public Information position to manage media relations and promote LITPOLUKRBRIG via media is established.

Deputy Chief of Staff Operations (DCOS OPS) manages all aspects of intelligence, current operations, short-term and long-term planning, civil-military coordination, and engineering.

S-2 section deals with all aspects of intelligence, being responsible for collecting and analysing as well as disseminating relevant intelligence; provides GEOMET data and assessment; coordinates EW assets and advises on any EW related issues.

S-3 section conducts short-term planning, preparation and control over close operations; coordinates fire support, air defence, force protection and CBRN protection; deals with rules of engagement; supports tactical operational centre (TOC) activities.

S-5 section conducts long-time planning; develops and coordinates overall policies and concepts; conducts operational analysis and provides recommendations, prepares guidance for future operations and general specifications for exercises.

S-7 section conducts all training concepts and training events; conducts training analysis and provides recommendations, prepares guidance for future training activities; coordinates education, training, and lessons learned related to all activities.

S-9 section maintains liaison with other government agencies, host-nation civil and military authorities, and non-governmental and international organizations in the area of operations; maintains public understanding and goodwill; supports military operations; gains information from civilians in the area of operations.

Engineering section develops military engineering policy and plans for operations; plans and controls the following engineer battlefield functions: Mobility, Counter mobility, Survivability; advises the commander on using all engineer assets, on employing and reducing obstacles; plans and coordinates environmental protection, critical areas, and protection levels.

Deputy Chief of Staff Support (DCOS SUP) manages all aspects of personnel, sustainment, and communication, financial and medical support.

S-1 section deals with readiness management, personnel accounting, and strength reporting, casualty operations management, replacement management, personnel information management, morale, welfare, and recreation and community support (functions); essential personnel services (functions).

S-4 section is responsible for all aspects concerning sustainment plans and operations, supply, maintenance, transportation, and services.

S-6 section provides communication and information system planning for exercises and operations; supervises the performance of communication and information systems by CP and units; manages the communication security within the area of operations.

S-8 deals with budgeting, funding, and accounting procedures; advises the Commander and Command Group in all matters of financial importance, supervises the planning, preparation, utilization, and statement of budgets in specific operations.

Medical section defines the medical mission during the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP). It advises DCOS SUP and all other staff functions on all medical and health-related matters; oversees the assessment of medical capabilities and constraints; evaluates their impact on current and planned operations.

Brigades activity

Over the past six years, the Brigade Command has participated in the RAPID TRIDENT Exercise, organized by the US Army, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the allied forces as well as the MAPLE ARCH Exercise, rotationally organized by Canada, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine. In addition, the Brigade Staff participated in the AGILE SPIRIT Exercise, organized by the US Army, the Georgian Armed Forces and the allied forces, which took place in Georgia. One of the most important and significant exercises of the brigade was the THREE SWORDS – 2021 Exercise, on the training field in the International Peacekeeping and Security Centre (IPSC) in Yavoriv, Lviv Region, Ukraine. It was the first time in the LITPOLUKRBRIG history that the three nations affiliated

units met on the ground to improve cohesion and interoperability in order to promote understanding and cooperation between different military forces. In the exercise, 1200 soldiers and more than 200 combat vehicles (including 5 helicopters) from Lithuania, Poland, Ukraine, and the US were engaged. It was named Three Swords because the three nations, Lithuania, Poland, and Ukraine had come together for one mission, strengthening the stability and security of the three countries. In addition to numerous training undertakings, LITPOLUKRBRIG has been involved in the training of Ukrainian soldiers as part of the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine – JMTG-U. JMTG-U is a multinational task force operating under the leadership of the United States Army, whose primary mission is to advise and assist the Ukrainian Armed Forces in developing operational capabilities in accordance with NATO military standards. The training is carried out by means of a rotational system. LITPOLUKRBRIG has been involved in the project since 2019. The main task is to act as advisers/mentors to military instructors of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Furthermore, LITPOLUKRBRIG has independently developed and conducted the Brigade/Battalion Staff Officers Course (BNSOC) for the brigade and battalion staff officers of the Ukrainian Army in the Military Decision Making Process.



Dariusz Materniak

Polish Armed Forces' Military Training Cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine

The tradition of Polish-Ukrainian military cooperation dates back many years. Some research can trace it back as far as the turn of the 15th century, or at least to the joint military expeditions of Polish noble-class warriors and the Zaporozhian Cossack army towards Moscow in the 17th century. Nowadays, the military collaboration includes joint participation in peacekeeping and stabilization missions in various corners of the world, but at its core lies a range of training projects.

Free Poland and Independent Ukraine: A New Opening

It is obvious (and it could not have been otherwise) that the armed forces of the Polish People's Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic were allies collaborating during numerous military manoeuvres and exercises organized regularly by the Warsaw Pact. The events of 1989-1991, however, changed the situation substantially. First, Poland

regained full independence and created its first democratic government (September 12, 1989, with Tadeusz Mazowiecki as prime minister) and soon after, Ukraine declared its independence from the USSR (August 24, 1991). Those changes predated the fall of the Soviet Union at the end of 1991 and, as a range of new challenges emerged, it meant that both countries needed a completely new approach to security. Poland and Ukraine unexpectedly found themselves in a situation of *de facto* strategic autonomy, outside of any military block, which pushed them to seek a new formula for their existence in a post-Cold War world where, as it soon turned out, “the end of history” had not actually happened.

The first bilateral contacts were established during the visit to Poland of the Ukrainian minister of defence, colonel Konstantin Morozov in 1992. In February 1993, an agreement on cooperation between the Polish and Ukrainian defence ministries was signed in Kiev. An opportunity to establish a new level of military collaboration – no longer enforced by decisions from Moscow but now sought consciously and voluntarily by both countries – appeared quite quickly with the launch of the Partnership for Peace in 1994. The goal of the program was to prepare the armed forces of participating nations to take part in United Nations peacekeeping operations and to establish cooperation between NATO members and former members of the Warsaw Pact. The need for such operations arose from the ongoing war in the former Yugoslavia, especially in Bosnia and Hercegovina. Both Poland and Ukraine joined the operations of international forces that facilitated the peace process, known from 1995 as IFOR and then from 1996 as SFOR. The next opportunity for joint operations

came in 1999 with the stabilization mission in Kosovo, and also in the Balkans. Those operations – especially the one in Kosovo – resulted in the establishment of joint multinational units. First came POLUKRBAT, created in 1997, a Polish-Ukrainian battalion that later carried out operations under KFOR and was subsequently joined by Lithuania (2001-2010). Later, those joint experiences gave rise to LITPOLUKRBRIG, a Multinational Lithuanian-Polish-Ukrainian Brigade.

In 2003, Poland and Ukraine joined a stabilization mission in Iraq under the command of the United States, the effect of the US operation “Iraqi Freedom” (with a minor contribution from Poland). From 2003 to 2005, a contingent of Ukrainian forces carried out joint tasks with the Polish contingent (PMC Iraq existed for a longer time, until 2008) and participated in Multinational Division Central-South under Polish command, which was responsible for security in central Iraq.

2014: The Second New Opening

The changes that took place in Ukraine at the end of 2013 and the beginning of 2014 following the Revolution of Dignity led to a significant shift in Ukrainian internal and external policy, including a reorientation of its defence policy. The main reason for this was Russian military aggression: first the annexation of the Crimean Peninsula, then the attempt to destabilize eastern and southern Ukrainian oblasts that resulted in a military conflict in Donbas and the creation of two pro-Russian separatist pseudostates: Donetsk People's Republic and Luhansk People's Republic. The war and the subsequent Ukrainian operations, first “Anti-Terrorist Op-

eration" (ATO) and then "Joint Forces Operation" (JFO), have continued since April 2014.

As already pointed out, the events of 2013/14 led to a complete change of direction in Ukrainian foreign and defence policy. Under Viktor Yanukovych, Ukraine had pursued a non-block status, if not indeed a close relationship with Russia, but since 2014, it set a robust course towards integration with NATO, a goal that was even written down in the Constitution of Ukraine. Currently, it would be hard to say when Kiev's accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization will be possible, but Ukraine's efforts to comply with NATO standards are well underway and it is easy to spot changes that took place in the Armed Forces of Ukraine's structure and methodology of operation following the 8 years of war in Donbas.

Ukraine's choice of political direction soon started to directly influence how its armed forces operated and, hence, also their military training. Joint military exercises have always been a way to show this. One of the most important exercises engaging soldiers from Poland and Ukraine is "Rapid Trident", carried out on the training grounds in western Ukraine. Another is "Sea Breeze" carried out annually on the Black Sea in the Odessa Oblast. Ukrainian soldiers also regularly participate in exercises of the Polish army, such as the "Dragon" and "Anakonda". For example, during the "Sea Breeze 2021" exercises, the Polish Navy and Special Forces – 8th Coastal Defence Flotilla and Military Unit Formoza – and Ukrainian 73rd Maritime Special Operations Centre carried out such joint tasks as naval boarding operations and elements of operational tactics in anti- and counterterrorism. The 2022 exercises are planned to take place on the Dnipro

River and involve officers from the Maritime Unit of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine.

With the passage of time, NATO members, including Poland, institutionalised their engagement in Ukraine, including establishing a separate training mission, the Joint Multinational Training Group – Ukraine (JMTG-U) at the Centre for Peacebuilding in the Yavoriv training centre near Lviv. JMTG-Ukraine tasks are carried out periodically by Polish soldiers from various military units, mostly armoured, mechanised, and airborne divisions. They conduct training mainly in NATO procedures and principles of operations for their Ukrainian counterparts. This training includes both theory and field training and benefits both sides; Ukrainian forces familiarize themselves with NATO procedures and standards, Polish soldiers, on the other hand, can learn from the combat experiences of Ukrainian soldiers, regarding, for example, the reconnaissance of Russian potential in using unmanned vehicles, electronic warfare, and artillery. It is worth noting here that the Armed Forces of Ukraine took part in asymmetric warfare (especially in 2014 and 2015) in which they dealt with a stronger, better armed, and better equipped opponent.

Alongside multilateral cooperation within NATO, Polish and Ukrainian soldiers are also engaged in bilateral exercises. Such operations have been carried out mostly by Polish Special Forces at least since 2016. At that time, Poland's Ministry of Defence confirmed that soldiers from the Jednostka Wojskowa Komandosów in Lubliniec, and Poland's Military Counterintelligence Service, conducted training for the 3rd Special Purpose Regiment of the Special Operations Forces of Ukraine. Other training included operational tactics for

infantry units, shooting practice, battlefield medicine, and military parachuting. These operations are carried out on a regular basis with the last rotation of Polish instructors in the autumn of 2021 and more expected in the future. Ukrainian soldiers also participate in courses in Poland organized as part of the training of Polish Special Forces.

This cooperation has produced measurable effects as, for example, the 3rd Special Purpose Regiment of the Special Operations Forces of Ukraine was certified as a NATO special ops unit. The NATO Evaluation (Nel-1) was conducted in the summer of 2021 as part of the “Silver Sabre 2021” exercises. It is the first level of evaluation that allows the unit to carry out operations within the NATO Response Force. To obtain the certificate, Ukrainian troops were evaluated in the course of the training by special forces from NATO countries, including Polish Special Forces. Earlier, a similar certificate that allows operations within NRF was granted in 2019 to the Ukrainian 140th Special Operations Centre of the Special Operations Forces during exercises carried out in Lithuania. The soldiers of the GROM special unit are also involved in the training of Ukrainian soldiers. A significant part of these activities is kept secret regarding the issues it concerns (the activities of special forces).

Another interesting example of collaboration is tank crew competitions, i.e., the “Strong Europe Tank Challenge” organised in Germany, in which Polish soldiers have participated for years and which Ukrainian tank soldiers joined a few years ago. The program of the competition includes a range of various operations and situations that can occur to tank crews in a combat zone; from live fire (tanks and small

arms), operations in contaminated areas, dealing with tank mines or IEDs, to casualty evacuation.

Perspectives

The current tensions caused by the Russian military build-up near Ukraine's borders are facilitating the tightening of military collaboration between Poland and Ukraine as well as other NATO countries. And will do so in the near future; currently, the supply of weapons to the Armed Forces of Ukraine has emerged as a new dimension of cooperation alongside training. Poland joined the efforts to arm Ukraine actively at the end of January 2022, announcing its intent to deliver "Piorun" anti-aircraft missiles, UAVs, mortars, and ammunition. In fact, Poland has been providing Ukraine with such assistance since the beginning of the conflict with Russia in 2014, including allowing the Ukrainian side to make necessary purchases in Poland and providing assistance through NGOs (mostly humanitarian aid such as medical equipment and training).

2022 should see the continuation of current trends of collaboration between Poland and Ukraine such as periodical military exercises, and existing formats of cooperation such as JMTG-Ukraine. New issues and new areas for joint actions could emerge as well, with potentially interesting examples being aviation (joint exercises of air forces have been planned for several years, but the Covid-19 pandemic blocked it in 2020 and 2021), and it is expected that special forces collaboration will expand, for example, with joint training in sniper operations, and Polish-Ukrainian short-range shooting competitions.

The author would like to thank the representatives of the Polish Armed Forces and Armed Forces of Ukraine, and the authors of the Bezpieczeństwo i Strategia blog (<https://bezpieczenstwoistrategia.com/>), for their help in preparing the article.



Sergiy Gerasymchuk, Mykhailo Drapak

Cooperation between Ukraine and Poland in Cybersecurity Issues

One of the hybrid threats that are becoming increasingly important in processes around the world, and in Central Europe in particular, is hacker attacks and other network influences on government agencies. Cybersecurity as part of the country's defence system is a relatively new page in the military histories of Ukraine and Poland; however, Kyiv and Warsaw have taken significant steps to develop them in recent years.

For more than a decade, both countries have been aware of the threats that may arise in cyberspace. During this time, they have repeatedly faced attempts to hack government websites and databases, blackmail authorities and officials via disclosure of information, and disable public services or business processes via online attacks. Some regulations also testify to the long-term awareness of risks in this area. For example, cybersecurity was mentioned in the first National Security Strategy of Ukraine, adopted in 2007. Simi-

lar threats were identified in the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Poland of 2007, but without specifying terminology.

However, only in the last 5-7 years, has resistance in the virtual sphere become one of the pillars of national defence in Kyiv and Warsaw. This was facilitated in particular by the general digitalisation of public administration and services. An increasing number of business processes for which states are responsible are moving online. The Ministry of Digital Affairs appeared in Poland in 2015, and the Ministry of Digital Transformation has been operating in Ukraine since 2019. Accordingly, more and more information about states and their capacity for action is shifting to the cybersphere. Therefore, these new spaces are also becoming the subject of national defence.

In addition to these factors, the urgency of building a cybersecurity system for Ukraine and Poland is exacerbated by recent events, which relate primarily to the field of military defence of the two states, as it concerns external influences and attacks on the ability of institutions to perform their domestic and foreign policy functions.

In the case of Poland, we can mention the attempt to hack more than 100 e-mails of current and former government officials in June 2021. The National Military Counterintelligence Service at that time reported evidence of hackers being linked to Russia. In addition, in 2021 the company Mandiant published a report which informed about a campaign of data theft and misinformation by Belarus against NATO's eastern flank. This activity has been going on since 2016, and one of its main goals was Poland. Finally, the most resonant message in this regard was the news in January

2022 about the leak of data on the logistics of the Polish army. The country's Defence Ministry eventually stated that the data could be found in the public arena. Nevertheless, the fact that the attackers managed to seize the base due to a leak of information from the structure of the Polish Armed Forces became a worrying sign for the entire defence system.

In recent months, Ukraine has also undergone numerous cyber tests. According to the Microsoft Digital Defence Report, from July 2020 to June 2021, Ukraine ranked second in the world after the United States by the number of hacker attacks. The country was the target of 19% of recorded interventions. The authors of this study also note that most cyber threats against the Ukrainian state during this period came from Russia, mainly focused on tracking and gathering information. Their primary goal was the government institutions of Ukraine, which formed the international support of the country amid the accumulation of Russian armed forces on the Russian-Ukrainian border. The attack on the web pages of state institutions of Ukraine on January 14, 2022, was a real shock. It targeted more than 70 sites; 22 of them were temporarily captured and 6 suffered serious damage. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Special Communications Service later stated the attack was most likely planned in Russia and aimed at destroying the government's data. In addition, in February 2022, the websites of the Ministry of Defence and the Armed Forces of Ukraine were subjected to a DoS attack, which the agencies managed to repel without losing control of the pages or data.

Both countries are responding to network threats and building an infrastructure to counter them. In Poland in 2018, a law on the state cybersecurity system was adopted.

Ministries and other public bodies responsible for digital processes, private and public actors, and intermediaries in these processes formed it together. Three Computer Security Incident Response Teams were established to respond to threats in the country – a government group within the Internal Security Agency (CSIRT GOV), a research group within the Research and Academic Computer Network (CSIRT NASK), and a military group within the Ministry of Defence of Poland (CSIRT MON). The third association focuses on countering external virtual threats, which is the subject of our attention. Also in 2019, Poland adopted a five-year cybersecurity strategy. This document aims to increase the country's resilience to digital threats and to establish effective protection of information in the public, military, and private sectors. It should be noted that the National Centre for Cryptology of the Polish Ministry of Defence has been in existence since 2013, which in 2019 was transformed into the National Centre for Cyber Security. Finally, in February 2022, a new component was established in the Polish Armed Forces – the Cyber Defence Forces. This structure will focus on both protective and reconnaissance, and offensive operations, and will cooperate with the National Centre for Cyber Security, which will be its analytical basis.

In Ukraine, the first Cyber Security Strategy was adopted in 2016, and in 2017 – the law on the basic principles of cyber security of Ukraine. Both documents provided the institutional and organisational foundations for countering threats in the digital sphere. In particular, after the adoption of these acts, cybersecurity centres were established in the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine, the Security Service of Ukraine, the

National Bank of Ukraine, the Ministry of Infrastructure of Ukraine, the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, and the Armed Forces of Ukraine. The CERT-UA Computer Emergency Response Team also started working. At the same time, the implementation of the Cyber Security Strategy 2016 did not exceed 40%. In particular, the issues of operational exchange of information on cyber threats, an effective training system, and an effective model of public-private partnership remained problematic. Ukraine's 2021 cybersecurity strategy aims to address these shortcomings. In addition, in 2020, the Signals Forces of the Armed Forces of Ukraine were transformed into the Signals and Cybernetic Security Forces. According to the authors of the reform, this step is a response to current challenges and a transition to NATO standards.

Thus, both Poland and Ukraine today have the frameworks of cybersecurity systems and are actively building interaction between their components. It is worth noting that both countries have created these mechanisms in response to similar challenges – threats from Russia and, to a lesser extent, its proxies in Belarus. Joint risks should be the basis for active cooperation between Poland and Ukraine in the field of cybersecurity. But in fact, there is currently no systematic interaction between the neighbours in this area, even though the legal and organisational conditions for this have been created. First of all, the Roadmap for Cooperation between Ukraine, Lithuania, and Poland within the framework of the Lublin Triangle is worth mentioning. The document highlights a separate area for cooperation in the digital sphere; in particular, the exchange of best practices of modern cyber tactics for countering threats and the

creation of exchange programs for students studying cybersecurity. In addition, Ukraine's Cyber Security Strategy provides for the development of communication, coordination, and strategic relations with the EU, the United States, and other NATO countries. However, this is not currently the case for Poland.

Instead, Ukraine is actively cooperating with the United States and Lithuania on countering virtual threats in the military component. Last year, representatives of the Ministry of Defence and the State Service for Special Communications and Information Protection of Ukraine took part in the Cyber Flag 21 exercise for the first time. Poland also joined that training as a NATO member. Also last year, delegations from the Regional Centre for Cyber Defence at the Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Lithuania twice visited the Heroes of Kruty Military Institute of Telecommunications and Informatisation in Ukraine. The parties discussed possible joint training and exchanged experiences. According to the Polish Minister of Defence, after the introduction of the Cyber Defence Forces, the Polish state is currently focused on building its own system of countering digital threats according to NATO standards and on appropriate cooperation with Allies.

Thus, we can say that:

Poland and Ukraine have passed the stage of establishing the foundations of national systems for combating cyber threats. Given the common challenges of the two countries and the existence of platforms for cooperation between them (within the Lublin Triangle and NATO initiatives), Warsaw and Kyiv have the necessary conditions for substantive cooperation in the field of defending their digital space.

Given the experience of systemic resistance to Russian aggression, particularly in cyberspace, Ukraine has valuable experience and competencies for exchange with its Polish counterparts. As a NATO member, Poland has the information and expertise to build an infrastructure for effective responses to digital threats. Therefore, both countries have significant potential to share important experiences in cybersecurity. The model of cooperation between Lithuania and Ukraine in this component can be used to build cooperation between Warsaw and Kyiv.

Given the common threats in cyberspace and the intensification of the Kremlin's aggression against Ukraine, the Polish and Ukrainian sides should establish a coordination group in the armed forces for the rapid exchange of information and joint responses to challenges.



About the Authors

Jakub Olchowski, PhD, academic teacher and international relations analyst. Head of Eastern Department in Institute of Central Europe in Lublin, employee of the International Security Department, Maria-Curie Skłodowska University in Lublin.

Maj. Tomasz Karliński, Chief of the Non-Kinetic Section (S-9) LITPOLUKRBRIG, responsible for Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), Information (INFOOPS), and Psychological (PSYOPS) operations.

Dariusz Materniak, alumnus of the Institute of International Relations, University of Warsaw, PhD in Security Studies, Police Academy in Szczytno, journalist and analyst, chief editor of the Polish-Ukrainian portal polukr.net. Interested in military and security affairs, and relations between Poland and Ukraine. Author and co-author on hybrid war, and Polish and Ukrainian armed forces (Ukrainian quarterly "Strategic Panorama" by the National Institute of Strategic Studies in Kiev, Polish monthly "Polska Zbrojna", biznesalert.pl, defence24.pl, and others).

Sergiy Gerasymchuk, board member at Strategic and Security Studies Group, deputy executive director at The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”, Kyiv, adviser at “Think Twice UA” Initiative.

Mykhailo Drapak, expert of the Regional Initiatives and Neighbourhood Program, The Foreign Policy Council “Ukrainian Prism”, Kyiv.

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The aim of this Policy Paper is to outline the topic of Polish-Ukrainian military cooperation in its various dimensions. The subject is undoubtedly worthy of attention, if only because of the complexity of Polish-Ukrainian relations, which remain burdened with many mutual claims.

What is important and should be emphasised is that most of the texts in this Policy Paper, written by experts from Poland and Ukraine, were written just before Russia's open aggression against Ukraine, which began on 24 February 2022 and introduced Europe and the world to a new stage in which the international order will be shaped, symbolically ending the post-cold war era.

This does not mean, however, that these texts have become obsolete. On the contrary, they seem to have gained momentum, summing up a certain stage of military cooperation between Ukraine and Poland. Russia's war against Ukraine has changed the conditions and rules of the game and will shape international security for a very long time, especially in Central and Eastern Europe.

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