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ORGANIZATION
FOR SECURITY
AND
CO-OPERATION
IN EUROPE
IN 2022

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EDITED BY
MICHAŁ
DULAK

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OBJECTIVES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION
IN THE FACE OF THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

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Michał Dulak

Institute of Political Science and International Relations, Jagiellonian University

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7737-5236>

 michal.dulak@uj.edu.pl

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Reviewed by

Marta Witkowska

Edited by

Lily Buchanan

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Paweł Sepielak

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WYDAWNICTWO KSIĘGARNIA AKADEMICKA

ul. św. Anny 6, 31-008 Kraków

tel.: 12 421-13-87; 12 431-27-43

e-mail: publishing@akademicka.pl

<https://akademicka.pl>

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Introduction: Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the Face of War in Ukraine – Challenges for the Polish Chairmanship in 2022

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) is not a popular subject of research and analysis. This is partly due to the greater prominence of other regional organizations tasked with ensuring peace and partly because of the OSCE's own inability to demonstrate its usefulness in resolving conflicts among its members. Another perspective on this issue is that the OSCE has become a victim of its own approach – namely, building trust and security based on goodwill and consensus. In situations where some OSCE member states exploit these principles to evade accountability for actions that violate international law, the organization becomes paralyzed.

In this context, one might question the value of studying a specific OSCE institution, such as the Chairmanship, when analyzing the organization as a whole seems to offer no new insights. However, as we planned our research on Poland's OSCE Chairmanship at the turn of 2021 and 2022, two considerations convinced us of its merit. First, the opportunity for a given country to lead this organization is relatively rare. In 2022, Poland became one of the few countries to assume the OSCE Chairmanship for a second time since 1990, with its previous term dating back to 1998. This rarity suggests that each Chairmanship takes place under distinct political circumstances, making it interesting to examine what specifically contributes to the success or failure of leading the OSCE. Second, the implementation of the OSCE Chairmanship falls

under the responsibility of ministries of foreign affairs, offering a chance to evaluate how effectively a country's diplomacy performs in the challenging environment of multilateral relations.

On 24th February 2022, an additional factor emerged, overshadowing the first two considerations. As a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine, two OSCE member states found themselves at war. Consequently, it became evident that the organization had to make efforts to halt this aggression as swiftly as possible. For these reasons, analyzing how Poland would manage OSCE policy under such circumstances became particularly compelling.

The two considerations outlined above define the structure of this book. The first part focuses on the OSCE itself and how it addresses contemporary threats to Euro-Atlantic security. The second part of the study examines Poland's OSCE Chairmanship exclusively – its course and the effectiveness of the actions undertaken. The methodological chapter serves as a conceptual bridge linking the first and second sections of the book. It ensures analytical coherence across the subsequent chapters by providing a scientific framework structured around the following sequence: introduction – research operationalization – analysis – synthesis.

The OSCE – a Political Relic of Europe's Security Architecture?

The OSCE, established in 1995 as the successor to the CSCE, initially boasted numerous confidence- and security-building measures as well as arms control mechanisms developed over the years. Over time, however, these instruments began to deteriorate (e.g., the conflicts in the Balkans during the 1990s and Russia's withdrawal from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe in 2007). Hopes for rebuilding the OSCE's significance within the regional security system were pinned on the Helsinki +40 reform process initiated in 2012 and its involvement in resolving the conflict between Russia and Ukraine that began in 2014. In the latter case, however, the so-called Normandy Format proved to be more flexible in many situations. It oversaw compliance with the Minsk Agreements and facilitated high-level political contacts between Ukraine and Russia.

The OSCE as a regional organization, emblematic of the changes in international relations taking place in the 1990s, has been extensively discussed in academic textbooks and numerous political science publications. Among the most significant works on this topic in the 21st century is the monograph *The Organization for Security and*

Co-operation in Europe by David J. Galbreath, published in 2007¹. Questions about the OSCE's role in international security, both past and present, were explored in Roberto Dominguez's 2014 book *The OSCE: Soft Security for a Hard World. Competing Theories for Understanding the OSCE*². Similarly, in 2021, Thomas Greminger addressed similar issues³. In Poland, some of the most important monographs on the OSCE include *KBWE/OBWE wobec problemów pokoju i bezpieczeństwa regionalnego* by Paweł Grudziński, *Wojskowe środki budowy zaufania i bezpieczeństwa na obszarze KBWE/OBWE w teorii i praktyce* by Zbigniew Wołás, and *Zagrożenia i instytucje bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego*, edited by Erhard Cziomer⁴. Many other studies concerning the OSCE are contextual, focusing on specific countries' relations with the organization⁵, assessing its contributions to peace and security in the region⁶, or

¹ D.J. Galbreath, *The Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe*, London–New York 2007.

² R. Dominguez, *The OSCE: Soft Security for a Hard World: Competing Theories for Understanding the OSCE*, Bruxelles–Bern–Berlin–Frankfurt am Main–New York–Oxford–Wien 2014.

³ T. Greminger, *The Organization for Security and Co-Operation in Europe*, [in:] *The Oxford Handbook of the International Law of Global Security*, R. Geiß, N. Melzer (eds), Oxford 2021, pp. 1052–1070.

⁴ P. Grudziński, *KBWE/OBWE wobec problemów pokoju i bezpieczeństwa regionalnego* [CSCE/OSCE towards Problems of Peace and Regional Security], Warsaw 2002; Z.W. Wołás, *Wojskowe środki budowy zaufania i bezpieczeństwa na obszarze KBWE/OBWE w teorii i praktyce* [Military Confidence and Security Measures in the CSCE/OSCE Area in Theory and Practice], Warsaw 2010; E. Cziomer (ed.), *Zagrożenia i instytucje bezpieczeństwa międzynarodowego* [Threats and Institutions of International Security], Kraków 2016. In the last book one can also find a chapter by E. Cziomer devoted to the CSCE/OSCE: E. Cziomer, *System bezpieczeństwa w ramach KBWE i OBWE* [The Security System under the CSCE and OSCE], [in:] *Zagrożenia i instytucje...*, pp. 191–212.

⁵ A. Mihr (ed.), *Transformation and Development: Studies in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Member States*, Cham 2020; Office of International Affairs of the Chancellery of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, *Zgromadzenie Parlamentarne OBWE i udział Polski w jego pracach 1997-2005* [OSCE Parliamentary Assembly and Poland's Participation in its Work 1997-2005], "Biuletyn Informacyjny" 2006, no. 1(43); R. Zięba, *Polska w OBWE* [Poland in the OSCE], "Krakowskie Studia Międzynarodowe" 2020, vol. 17, no. 2, pp. 295–308.

⁶ A. Gheciu, *Securing Civilization? The EU, NATO and the OSCE in the Post-9/11 World*, Oxford 2008; P.T. Hopmann, *The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe: Its Contribution to Conflict Prevention and Resolution*, [in:] *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, P.C. Stern, D. Druckman (eds.), Washington, D.C. 2000; L.M. Lüthi, *The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe*, [in:] *Cold Wars: Asia, the Middle East, Europe*, L.M. Lüthi (ed.), Cambridge 2020, pp. 438–461; R. Zięba, *Bezpieczeństwo europejskie czterdzieści lat po podpisaniu Aktu Końcowego KBWE* [European Security Forty Years after the Signing of the CSCE Final Act], "Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej" 2015, no. 9, pp. 109–122. Ryszard Zięba covered this topic back in the 1990s: R. Zięba, *Funkcjonowanie paneuropejskiego mechanizmu bezpieczeństwa KBWE/OBWE* [Functioning of the CSCE/OSCE Pan-European Security Mechanism], "Studia Europejskie" 1998, no. 3, pp. 85–106.

Summary

The book *Poland's Chairmanship in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in 2022: Objectives and Their Implementation in the Face of the Russian-Ukrainian War* provides an in-depth analysis of Poland's role during the OSCE Chairmanship in 2022. It explores the institutional challenges of the OSCE, Poland's diplomatic strategies, and the impact of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on the organization's activities.

The OSCE in the Context of the Russian-Ukrainian War

The first part of the book seeks to address research questions about how the institutional evolution of the OSCE has unfolded since 1995 and whether the institutional and organizational changes implemented over the past three decades have improved the OSCE's functioning across its three dimensions: politico-military, human, and economic. By updating our understanding of these issues and analyzing them in the context of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war, this part of the book allows us to answer the question of what initiatives the OSCE has undertaken to resolve the conflict in Ukraine since 2014 and how effective these efforts have been.

Based on the analysis conducted in the first two chapters of the book, the following hypothesis (H1) will be verified: The OSCE is an organization not adapted to addressing contemporary security challenges in the Euro-Atlantic area.

The publication begins by examining the broader role of the OSCE as a regional security organization and its ability to address contemporary threats to Euro-Atlantic security. The first chapter by Agnieszka Nitszke assesses the role of the OSCE in the evolving security landscape of the Euro-Atlantic region, particularly in light of new threats. It traces the institutional development of the OSCE from its origins as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and evaluates its effectiveness as a security guarantor. The chapter also examines the OSCE's relationships with NATO and the EU, highlighting its limited ability to enforce security provisions in contrast to these organizations.

The second chapter by Olesia Kryvenko focuses on the OSCE's role in mitigating the Russian-Ukrainian conflict that began in 2014. It examines OSCE-led initiatives, such as the Special Monitoring Mission and the Trilateral Contact Group, and the organization's diplomatic engagement in ceasefire agreements. The chapter highlights the OSCE's structural weaknesses, particularly its reliance on consensus, which has allowed Russia to obstruct its crisis-response mechanisms. The OSCE's failure to effectively intervene in Crimea and the Donbas is critically analyzed, illustrating its limited capacity to handle conflicts involving major powers.

Poland's Role during OSCE Chairmanship

The second part of the book seeks to answer the following research questions: What criteria can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a country's OSCE Chairmanship? How has the role and significance of the Chairperson-in-Office evolved within the OSCE structure over the past two decades? How did Poland prepare for its OSCE Chairmanship? What were the objectives of Poland's OSCE Chairmanship program? Did the program change as a result of Russia's attack on Ukraine in February 2022? What was Poland able to achieve from the original goals of its Chairmanship program? What actions did Poland undertake to promote peace and security in the Central and Eastern European region?

The analysis conducted in the third, fourth, fifth and sixth chapter, that the second part of this book is composed of will allow for the verification of the following hypothesis (H2): During its OSCE Chairmanship, Poland actively utilized the mechanisms and institutions of the organization to increase international pressure on Russia and counteract the escalation of the conflict with Ukraine.

Poland assumed the OSCE Chairmanship at a critical juncture, with the Russian invasion of Ukraine unfolding just weeks into its tenure. This part of the book examines how Poland structured its Chairmanship, opting for a decentralized and flexible management model that allowed it to respond swiftly to the war.

The third chapter by Michał Dulak outlines the criteria used to evaluate Poland's performance as OSCE Chair. It distinguishes between political, expert, social, and systemic evaluations, arguing that Poland's chairmanship should be assessed based on diplomatic adaptability rather than traditional policy effectiveness metrics. The chapter highlights the assessment of parliamentary committees, expert think tanks, and public discourse, and evaluation models developed in previous OSCE Chairmanships such as in Switzerland's 2014 tenure.

The fourth chapter by Michał Dulak and Eugeniusz Portny traces the evolution of the OSCE Chairmanship from its initial conception in the 1990s to its current form. It discusses the chairmanship's functions—coordination, representation, political leadership, and creative diplomacy—and examines its constraints within the OSCE's decision-making framework. The chapter contextualizes Poland's tenure within the broader history of OSCE chairmanships, noting how the role has changed due to geopolitical developments.

The fifth chapter by Wiktor Kęsy and Eugeniusz Portny details Poland's OSCE agenda, which was initially based on long-term security goals but had to be radically adjusted due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The program was structured around the three OSCE dimensions—politico-military, economic-environmental, and human—and was heavily influenced by Poland's broader foreign policy priorities. Before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Poland aimed to strengthen OSCE mechanisms for conflict resolution, enhance cooperation with international partners, and promote stability in regions facing protracted conflicts. The chapter details how these objectives were formulated, drawing on past OSCE Chairmanships while introducing new priorities specific to Poland's tenure.

The sixth chapter by Eugeniusz Portny and Wiktor Kęsy provides a detailed analysis of how Poland's OSCE Chairmanship in 2022 was forced to adapt to the radical shift in the European security landscape following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. Poland's OSCE Chairmanship in 2022 was fundamentally reshaped by Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, forcing a shift from long-term diplomatic engagement to crisis management. Initially, Poland sought to leverage OSCE mechanisms such as the Normandy Format, Trilateral Contact Group, and Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM) to mediate the conflict, but Russia's aggression rendered these tools ineffective. Moscow blocked the renewal of the SMM's mandate and obstructed OSCE operations, prompting Poland to launch the Renewed OSCE European Security Dialogue (RESD) in an effort to maintain diplomatic engagement. However, Russia showed no interest in the initiative, effectively ending hopes for a negotiated resolution within the OSCE framework. In response, Poland adopted the “no business as usual” policy, ensuring that the war dominated OSCE discussions and actively opposing Russian attempts to manipulate the organization. Despite Russia's obstructionist tactics—such as blocking the OSCE budget and key operational decisions—Poland worked closely with the Like-Minded Group of Western states to maintain institutional cohesion and counter Moscow's influence.

Faced with OSCE institutional paralysis, Poland pursued alternative strategies to support Ukraine, notably establishing the OSCE Support Programme for Ukraine (SPU),

which provided aid in mine clearance, legal assistance of reforms, and countering disinformation. Since the SPU was financed through voluntary contributions, it bypassed Russia's ability to veto OSCE funding. Beyond the military and political dimensions, Poland also integrated the economic-environmental and human rights aspects of the OSCE agenda into its response, organizing the Warsaw Human Dimension Conference to address Russian war crimes and forced deportations, as well as the OSCE Economic and Environmental Forum in Prague to discuss the war's impact on food and energy security. While Poland's Chairmanship reaffirmed the OSCE's role as a diplomatic platform, it also exposed the organization's deep structural weaknesses, particularly its reliance on consensus-based decision-making, which allowed Russia to paralyze key functions. The chapter concludes that, despite Poland's efforts to sustain OSCE unity and adapt its priorities, the war underscored the urgent need for institutional reforms to prevent authoritarian states from exploiting the organization's mechanisms in future crises.

The book confirms two key hypotheses. First, **the OSCE is not adequately adapted to contemporary security challenges**. The gap between the OSCE's formal mandates and the reality of international security crises—exacerbated by Russia's actions—demonstrates the organization's declining effectiveness. Second, **Poland actively used OSCE mechanisms to counter Russian aggression and maintain the organization's cohesion**. Despite institutional limitations, Poland played a critical role in ensuring that the OSCE remained a platform for diplomatic pressure against Russia.

The publication ultimately questions the future of the OSCE, particularly in the wake of the war in Ukraine, and explores whether institutional reforms could enhance its effectiveness. It highlights the need for stronger enforcement mechanisms, a reevaluation of the consensus-based decision-making model, and deeper integration with other international security institutions.

Keywords: OSCE Chairmanship, Poland's OSCE Chairmanship-in-Office, Russian-Ukrainian war, international security, conflict resolution, institutional reform

Authors

AGNIESZKA NITSZKE – PhD, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Political Science and International Relations at Jagiellonian University. Her research interests include European integration, with a focus on European policies and EU institutions, as well as political parties and their influence on the decision-making process. She is the author of the monographs *Zasada federalizmu w państwach niemieckojęzycznych* [*The Principle of Federalism in German-Speaking Countries*] (Kraków 2013) and *System agencji Unii Europejskiej* [*The System of European Union Agencies*] (Kraków 2017), as well as a series of articles on European integration and political parties. From 2016 to 2019, she was a member of the team implementing the Jean Monnet Chair grant led by Prof. Janusz Węc, titled *European Union in Crisis: What's Wrong and How to Fix It*.

OLEZIA KRYVENKO – PhD, Assistant Professor in the Chair of Studies on Integration Processes at the Institute of Political Science and International Relations, Jagiellonian University. She is the author of the monograph *Rosja wobec wymiaru wschodniego Europejskiej Polityki Sąsiedztwa Unii Europejskiej w latach 2004-2022* [*Russia and the Eastern Dimension of the European Union's European Neighbourhood Policy in 2004–2022*] (2023) and numerous academic articles, including *Specjalna misja monitorująca OBWE na Ukrainie – cele i problemy w ich realizacji* [*The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine – Goals and Challenges in Their Implementation*] (2017) and *Three Decades of Relations Between the European Union and Moldova – From Cooperation to the Membership Perspective* (2022). Her research interests include international security with a particular focus on the post-Soviet area, European integration, and the Eastern Partnership.

EUGENIUSZ PORTNY – Graduate of Eurasian Studies, second-year Master's student in International Relations, and doctoral candidate at the Doctoral School of Social Sciences at Jagiellonian University in the discipline of Political Science and Public Administration. His research interests include ethnic and national minorities, centrifugal movements,

state-building processes, and the functioning of international organizations. He is the author of several academic papers and co-editor of the multi-author monograph *Podmioty pozapaństwowe jako determinanta współczesnych stosunków międzynarodowych* [*Non-State Actors as a Determinant of Contemporary International Relations*] (Kraków, 2023). He serves as a member of the Audit Committee of the Jagiellonian University International Relations Students' Association and as a member of the Doctoral Council of the Doctoral School of Social Sciences at Jagiellonian University.

WIKTOR KĘSY – Graduate of a Bachelor's degree and current Master's student in International Relations. His research focuses on the analysis of conflicts in the post-Soviet area and issues of international law in armed conflicts. He has actively participated in numerous academic student conferences, presenting papers on topics such as cybersecurity, China's soft power building in Africa, and the potential and internal cohesion of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO). From May 2022 to June 2023, he served as secretary of the Jagiellonian University International Relations Students' Association, actively contributing to the organization of academic events and the internal affairs of the association.

MICHAŁ DULAK – PhD, Assistant Professor at the Institute of Political Science and International Relations at Jagiellonian University. He is the head of an interfaculty unit at Jagiellonian University – the Polish Research Center. Author of 40 academic works, including books, articles, and analyses, focusing on European integration, public policies, and local government. His publications include the monographs *Legitymizacja polskiej polityki europejskiej. Analiza systemowa* [Legitimization of Polish European Policy: A Systemic Analysis] (2017) and *Ocena skutków regulacji w gminach* [Regulatory Impact Assessment in Municipalities] (2020; edited volume).

Poland's Chairmanship in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2022 took place during an unprecedented crisis—Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. This book provides a comprehensive analysis of Poland's OSCE Chairmanship, assessing both its diplomatic efforts and the broader challenges facing the organization.

The first part of the book examines the evolution of the OSCE, its institutional weaknesses, and its ability to respond to contemporary security threats. It critically evaluates the OSCE's engagement in Ukraine since 2014, including the Special Monitoring Mission and Trilateral Contact Group, exposing the organization's structural limitations in conflict resolution.

The second part focuses on Poland's leadership in the OSCE, detailing how its initial objectives were reshaped by war. It explores Poland's strategic decisions, such as implementing the "no business as usual" policy and launching the OSCE Support Programme for Ukraine. The book concludes with a discussion on the future of the OSCE, questioning whether institutional reforms are necessary to prevent authoritarian states from obstructing its mission.

A must-read for scholars, diplomats, and policymakers, this publication offers **critical insights into European security governance**, Poland's diplomatic strategy, and the OSCE's role in a **rapidly changing geopolitical landscape**.

