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Security issues in political parties declarations during the Polish parliamentary election campaign of 2023

Annotation: The significance of security in the contemporary world is fundamental and indisputable. As such, this issue has been raised in a number of articles and theoretical studies over the last decades, which has resulted in the emergence of a separate discipline of security studies. Thanks to higher education and the growing number of university graduates social awareness of this matter is constantly rising. The events happening in the recent years, most notably, a full-scale Russian aggression on the neighbouring Ukraine, as well as the pan-European migration crisis, have made security and military defence issues even more significant than before. In this context the following questions arise: Is this awareness equally high among members of the Polish parliament? When facing the war just across the Polish border, do authors of party programmes and election campaign strategists (at the same time candidates for high public positions) devote enough attention to this issue and its interrelations?

The attempt to answer these questions involved an analysis of the party declarations related to the issues of security and defence policy of those political groups that gained the sufficient number of votes to win a certain number of parliamentary mandates. The specific aim of this article, then, was to check whether the security issues were incorporated into electoral programmes amidst wars and crises in Europe, and, if yes, how they were defined. These research questions led to the formulation of the following hypothesis: taking into account the dynamically changing security situation in the local, regional and global dimensions, the security issues should find their multi-faceted realization in party declarations during the 2023 Polish parliamentary election campaign by virtually all campaign committees. The research material were, most of all, official programmes of campaign committees, which were supplemented with selected media appearances by representatives of these committees.

Keywords: security, 2023 parliamentary elections, election campaign, political groups, electoral programmes.

Kwestie bezpieczeństwa w deklaracjach partyjnych podczas kampanii wyborczej do parlamentu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 2023 roku

Streszczenie: Znaczenie bezpieczeństwa we współczesnym świecie jest niepodważalne i bezdyskusyjne. Stanowi zagadnienie, któremu w ostatnich dekadach poświęcono wiele artykułów i rozpraw teoretycznych, co w praktyce przełożyło się na powstanie odrębnej dyscypliny nauk o bezpieczeństwie. Dzięki studiom wyższym i ich licznym absolwentom sukcesywnie rośnie świadomość społeczna tej materii. Wydarzenia ostatnich lat, przede wszystkim pełnowymiarowa agresja Rosji na sąsiadującą z Polską Ukrainę, jak również ogólnoeuropejski kryzys migracyjny, spowodowały, iż kwestie bezpieczeństwa i polityki obronnej jeszcze mocniej zyskały na znaczeniu. W tym kontekście warto zadać pytanie, czy także wśród parlamentarzystów ta świadomość jest równie wysoka? Czy w obliczu wojny toczącej się tuż za polską granicą, twórcy programów partyjnych oraz strategii kampanii wyborczej, a zarazem kandydaci do objęcia wysokich stanowisk publicznych, poświęcali uwagę temu zagadnieniu oraz jego współzależnościom?

W celu uzyskania odpowiedzi na to pytanie podjęłam próbę analizy deklaracji partyjnych tych ugrupowań politycznych, które w wyborach parlamentarnych 2023 r. uzyskały liczbę głosów przekładającą się na określoną liczbę mandatów poselskich, właśnie pod kątem zagadnienia bezpieczeństwa i polityki obronnej. Szczegółowym celem artykułu było zatem sprawdzenie czy w obliczu wojen i kryzysów w Europie, zagadnienia bezpieczeństwa zostały zaimplementowane do programów wyborczych, a jeśli tak, to w jaki sposób były definiowane? W oparciu o pytania badawcze sformułowałam następującą hipotezę: biorąc pod uwagę okoliczności dynamicznie zmieniającej się sytuacji bezpieczeństwa w wymiarze lokalnym, regionalnym i globalnym, w deklaracjach partyjnych podczas kampanii wyborczej do Parlamentu RP 2023 r., zagadnienia bezpieczeństwa będą poruszane wieloaspektowo przez wszystkie komitety wyborcze. Materiał badawczy stanowiły przede wszystkim oficjalne dokumenty programowe komitetów wyborczych, ale również, jako uzupełnienie, wybrane wypowiedzi medialne przedstawicieli tych ugrupowań.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo; wybory parlamentarne 2023; kampania wyborcza; ugrupowania polityczne; programy wyborcze

Introduction

Security has a universal nature as one of the basic needs of man since it enables not only human existence or survival, but also development. As noted by Jerzy Stańczyk¹, security as a concept is characterized by polysemy, multidimensionality, fluidity, interdisciplinarity and other aspects. Its meaning is extremely wide: ranging from a personal dimension, through social, military, economic, political up to national and international ones. The subject literature contains numerous definitions of security depending on different typology criteria and different variables considered. Thus, in order to avoid any misunderstanding and unnecessary broadening of the analysis scope, the definition adopted in the current work is the holistic approach to the scope of national security as a set of horizontal relations by Waldemar Kitler, who stated as follows: "National security is an entity composed of several mutually complementary phenomena, situations,

¹ Confer J. Stańczyk, *Formułowanie kategorii pojęciowej bezpieczeństwa*, Wydawnictwo Naukowe FNCE, 2017.

states of matters, which enter into reciprocal relations and require holistic thinking (approach) [...]”². Such an understanding of the concept enables distinguishing different kinds of security according to the subject criterion: for instance, military, economic, political, public, ecological, social or cultural security. All these add up to the holistic concept of national security, but, at the same time, they enter into mutual relations with social, economic and even military consequences that influence the security situation of the state and that are hard to predict. “Within such an approach, a particular situation [...] must be considered through the lens of national security interests and must be perceived as a source (reason) triggering its consequences in several areas of the state’s functioning. As a result, it can be a threat understood as a mixture of events in either internal or external relations, which lead to a danger of limiting safe national existence and development in different areas of the state’s and society’s activities.”³.

The 2023 elections to the Polish Sejm and Senate took place on 15 October 2023 between 7.00 a.m. and 9 p.m. The voter turnout in the Sejm election was 74.38% while in the Senate one – 74.31%. The National Election Commission registered twelve campaign committees, five of which gained a sufficient number of votes to win mandates in the Polish parliament.⁴ The analysis herein focused on those committees that won parliamentary mandates: Law and Justice Campaign Committee (KW PiS), Civic Coalition Campaign Committee: Civic Platform, Modern, Polish Initiative, Greens (KKW KO), Third Way Szymon Hołownia’s Poland 2050 – Polish People’s Party Coalition Campaign Committee (KKW TD), New Left Campaign Committee (KW NL) and Confederation Liberty and Independence Campaign Committee (KW KWiN).

Table no. 1. A summary of all registered campaign committees with the voting results

Campaign committee	Number of votes	Percentage of votes	Number of mandates	Percentage of mandates
Law and Justice Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Prawo i Sprawiedliwość)	7,640,854	35.38%	194	42.17%
Civic Coalition Campaign Committee: Civic Platform, Modern, Polish Initiative, Greens (Koalicyjny Komitet Wyborczy Koalicja Obywatelska PO .N IPL Zieloni)	6,629,402	30.70%	157	34.13%

² *Identyfikacja, klasyfikacja, podział i uzasadnienie pojęcia, istoty, składników i zakresu bezpieczeństwa państwa (narodowego)*, eds. J. Gryz, W. Kitler, Wydawnictwo AON 2014, p. 24-25.

³ *Ibidem*, p. 26-27.

⁴ The National Election Commission’s website <<https://wybory.gov.pl/sejmsenat2023/>>, „Wybory”, [accessed: 3.01.2024].

Campaign committee	Number of votes	Percentage of votes	Number of mandates	Percentage of mandates
Third Way Coalition Campaign Committee Szymon Hołownia's Poland 2050 – Polish People's Party (Koalicyjny Komitet Wyborczy Trzecia Droga Polska 2050 Szymona Hołowni - Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe)	3,110,670	14.40%	65	14.13%
New Left Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Nowa Lewica)	1,859,018	8.61%	26	5.65%
Confederation Liberty and Independence Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Konfederacja Wolność i Niepodległość)	1,547,364	7.16%	18	3.91%
Nonpartisan Local Government Activists Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Bezpartyjni Samorządowcy)	401,054	1.86%	0	0.00%
There Is Only One Poland Campaign Committee (KOMITET WYBORCZY POLSKA JEST JEDNA)	351,099	1.63%	0	0.00%
German Minority Voters' Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Wyborców Mniejszość Niemiecka)	25,778	0.12%	0	0.00%
Movement for Prosperity and Peace Voters' Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Wyborców Ruchu Dobrobytu i Pokoju)	24,850	0.12%	0	0.00%
Normal Country Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Normalny Kraj)	4,606	0.02%	0	0.00%
Anti-Party Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Antypartia)	1,156	0.01%	0	0.00%
Movement for Poland's Restoration Campaign Committee (Komitet Wyborczy Ruch Naprawy Polski)	823	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	21,596,674	100.00%	460	100.00%

Source: National Election Commission's website <<https://wybory.gov.pl/sejmsenat2023/>, „Wybory”, [accessed: 3.01.2024]

According to the Election Code of Poland, the election campaign commences upon the announcement of the President of the Republic of Poland on the organization of the election and ends 24 hours before the opening of voting⁵. This

⁵ Act of 5 January 2011 Election Code, Journal of Laws of 2011 no. 21 item 112, article 104; Journal

means that during the 2023 parliamentary election the official election campaign period started on 8 August when the President's announcement on organizing the election to the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland on 15 October 2023 issued on the same day was published in the Journal of Laws⁶. At the same time, the electoral calendar was issued, according to which during the period between 30 September and 13 October (until 12 a.m.) campaign committees are entitled to free-of-charge dissemination of their election programmes in state radio and television broadcasts.

The regulations of the Election Code specify the way of running and financing election campaign, setting the rule of transparency of election campaign funding as fundamental, detailing the ways of gaining and spending funds by campaign committees as well as the mode of submitting financial reports by financial proxies of campaign committees. In paragraph one of Article 105 of the Election Code, the legislature explains the term "electoral canvassing": "It is public encouragement to vote in a particular way or for a candidate of a particular campaign committee"⁷. Canvassing can be started on the very day on which an authorized body accepts the announcement on the formation of the campaign committee of a particular political party. However, there are numerous limitations and conditions which, when violated, can result in a negative opinion of the National Election Commission, rejection of the committee's financial report or even criminal liability of the very party. The concept of "election campaign" is not defined by the act, however, for the purpose of the current article, its communicative definition was adopted.⁸ It is assumed that the heart of the process is the communicative act, in which the sender (a political party) uses mass media as a channel of transmission to communicate their offer of political actions (a message) to the receiver (a potential voter). This is done to encourage the latter to vote for the party's representatives (feedback loop). Obviously, this does not in any way influence the fact that the election campaign is determined in time and space by legal regulations and has its own specificity and purposefulness, which is gaining as high support as possible and getting ahead of the competitors as much as possible.⁹ To sum up, the analysis comprised the programmes of five campaign committees (and, as an amendment, selected media statements of representatives of these political groups), made publicly available during the period of the actual election campaign. The issues of national security (understood as a set of several interrelated kinds of security, defined on the basis of

of Laws of 2022 item 1277 as amended.

⁶ Decree of the President of the Republic of Poland of 8 August 2023 on the announcement of the election to the Sejm and Senate of the Republic of Poland, Journal of Laws of 8 August 2023, item 1564.

⁷ Act of 5 January 2011 Election Code, Journal of Laws of 2011 no. 21 item 112, article 105; Journal of Laws of 2022 item 1277 as amended.

⁸ Apart from the communicative definition of the term „election campaign”, researchers also distinguish a legal-organizational, marketing and teleological ones. Confer M. Borowicz, *Kampania wyborcza – definicje i cechy charakterystyczne*, „Athenaeum. Polskie Studia Politologiczne” 2010, vol. 23, p. 133-145.

⁹ Confer B. Dobek-Ostrowska, R. Wiszniowski, *Teoria komunikowania politycznego i publicznego. Wprowadzenie*, Wrocław 2002, p. 147-148; B. Dobek-Ostrowska, *Komunikowanie polityczne i publiczne. Podręcznik akademicki*, Warszawa 2006, p. 245.

the subject criterion) were explored through the lens of values, needs, aims, interests and problems relevant to the state. Below comes a comprehensive elaboration on the issue of security by each of the political groups that gained parliamentary mandates in the 2023 election.

„Law And Justice” Campaign Committee

The Law and Justice Campaign Committee (KW PiS) issued a long, three-page programme statement whose very title made clear reference to the issue of security: “Secure future for the Poles”¹⁰. The document comprises a few parts. The first one is a kind of manifesto on values and principles the group is driven by with the explanation of the historical context (so-called “challenges of post-communism”). The subsequent part sums up the party’s activities to date, while the next one sketches the plans for the future parliamentary term. The document concludes with a vision for the future of Poland after 2031. The plan to merge the programme with a summary of the party’s achievements so far is fully understandable – Law and Justice was a ruling party in the Polish Sejm since 2015, thus, it had an actual influence on the shape of the state policy in the recent years as the only group out of those analyzed. This fact enabled the party to underline its achievements and propose continuity of political actions, also in the realm of security.

The introduction to the programme declares security as one of its most fundamental principles: „[...] Both our history and current political events clearly demonstrate that providing security for the Nation is the highest duty resting on the shoulders of all of us”¹¹. The intellectual mentor and the actual mastermind behind the party’s programme is believed to be Lech Kaczyński, President of the Republic of Poland in the years 2005–2010, who died tragically in the Smolensk air crash of 10 April 2010. The security policy doctrine draws upon the conception of Józef Piłsudski, summed up as “making higher bids for the Polish matters”¹², which was adapted to the contemporary reality. The mentor of PiS saw Russia and its imperialist desires as the greatest threats to our country. Many conversations, media statements and programme documents evoke his words to constitute an important context for the issue of security, for instance, a quotation from a speech given in Georgia under attack by the Russian Federation (Tbilisi, 2008): „We also know it perfectly well that today it’s time for Georgia, tomorrow for Ukraine, the day after tomorrow for the Baltic states, while later the time might come for Poland too”. The second key threat formulated by Lech Kaczyński was the strong and historically solidified bond between Germany and Russia, which necessitates adopting a policy of limited trust in relation to our Western neighbour. The third pillar of the security policy is the assumption that “Poland matters in the world as much as it does in the region”. This obviously implies a necessity for collaboration with the states of Central and Eastern Europe, which share a similar geopolitical,

¹⁰ PiS website <<https://pis.org.pl/dokumenty>> „Program PiS”, [accessed: 12.12.2023].

¹¹ KW PiS Programme, *Bezpieczna przyszłość Polaków*, p. 16.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 85.

historical and economic situation. The fourth and the final pillar of the security policy of this political group was a strong bond with the United States, which is a guarantee of our stability and security. The authors of the programme strongly underline the point that Russia's invasion of Crimea in 2014 started the process of lowering the security level in Europe, which went in line with the tensions inside the European Union and tightening of the economic cooperation between Germany and Russia. Thus, PiS interpreted the Russian Federation's attack on Ukraine in February 2021 as an unequivocal confirmation of Lech Kaczyński's thesis. It was a powerful, if not the strongest, argument of the party in the 2023 election campaign.

In this context, several events were brought to light by the party's representatives:

- Border barriers: a physical barrier with an electronic barrier on the border with Belarus (187 kms) and an electronic barrier on the border with Russia (200 kms) were both built in the years 2022-2023 as a reaction to hybrid attacks on the border with Belarus, which preceded the outbreak of the war in Ukraine.

- Rejection of the forced displacement of immigrants proposed by the European Union. The programme document stresses the fact that solving the problem of illegal migration through forced displacement abuses the member states' sovereignty. Alternatively, the party proposed the idea of external reception-asylum centres.¹³

- Investment in the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. As the achievements to date, the authors of the document enumerate the establishment of the Armament Agency and the Council for Technical Modernization, which both helped to consolidate the tasks of provision of military equipment¹⁴. In 2023 Poland became the first out of all the NATO states as regards growth and level of expenditure on national defence. The declarations for the upcoming years were as follows:

- Increasing the number of military personnel to 300,000;
- Establishing new military units, especially stationed in Eastern Poland;
- Implementing – within a few years – additional thousands of tanks, a multi-layer air defence system supported by a system of radars, surveillance aircraft and UAVs;
- Restoring the potential of the Navy;

¹³ According to the proposed solution, if a plea for international protection is eventually rejected, and a citizen of a third country cannot go back quickly to his/her country of origin, this person would be transferred to the third country, where he/she would stay until returning to their country of origin. Currently, the EU and international regulations assume that after the rejection of their plea, a migrant can be returned only to the country of their origin or the country through which the person made their transfer. According to the programme authors, the mechanism of reception-asylum centres would solve the problem of reception of illegal migrants in the EU. *Ibidem*, p. 156.

¹⁴ According to a list included in the PiS programme document, contracts for the following equipment were signed: AW149 (32) and AW101 (4) helicopters, „Chunmoo” rocket launchers (288), „HI-MARS” rocket systems (500), F-35 (32) and FA-50 (48) aircraft, „Abrams” tanks (250 in the M1A2 SEP v.3 variant and 116 in the M1A1 variant) or surveillance satellites. The contracts completed comprised, among others, „Patriot” systems (8), K2 tanks, K9 howitzers, „Bayraktar” drones (24), „Kormoran” II mine destroyers (3), „Krab” howitzers (96), „Rak” gun-mortars, „Piorun”, „Pilica and „Mała Narew” sets. See *Ibidem*, p. 94-99

- Reaching operational readiness by the Cyberspace Defence Forces;
 - Continuing projects supporting the Polish defence industry, among others, the National Ammunition Program.
- Strengthening civil defence, including voluntary general military service, establishing so-called Reserve Divisions and supporting the development of military education, through establishing new specialist training study programmes, as well as rebuilding the Military Medical Academy. PiS campaign committee also declared maintaining and increasing the number of military (uniformed) class profiles at schools, establishing new training and grant programs for secondary school students, as well as continuing existing educational-training projects (e.g., “Train with the Army”). Also, a promise was made to implement an obligatory first-aid course for secondary school students and to change the Core Curriculum of the subject “Education for safety”.
- Establishing the Territorial Defence Forces (at the beginning of 2017) as the fifth kind of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland. The formation currently comprises over 37,000 personnel, and the target number of TDF soldiers is estimated at 53,000.
- Passing the Homeland Defence Act¹⁵, which subsumed several legal acts, including the Act on General Defence Obligation. The new document created a legal basis for increasing the expenditure on defence up to at least 3% of the Gross Domestic Product¹⁶. Moreover, the Armed Forces Support Fund was established to facilitate the process of purchasing equipment for the army. Finally, a new National Security Strategy was proposed and passed on 12 May 2020¹⁷.
- Modernization of the uniformed forces subjected to the Minister of Home Affairs and Administration (MSWiA), through implementing dedicated programs amounting to the total balance of 9.2 billion PLN. The programs were founded on three pillars: 1) replacement and modernization of equipment, 2) investments in infrastructure and 3) salary rise for both uniformed and non-uniformed staff. 162 police stations were reinstated and the Central Bureau for Combatting Cybercrime was established. The act introducing benefits for family members of uniformed personnel or soldiers who died in service, an additional motivational benefit after 15 years of service and the act regulating the status of animals in uniformed forces were passed. Declarations were made to continue these programs.
- Making changes in the diplomatic structures, most notably: establishing the position of the Foreign Service Chief, termination of employment of graduates of foreign academies established or run by special forces of non-allied countries, opening eight new embassies, three consulates, two permanent representations and the Polish Institute in Tbilisi. The authors of the PiS programme especially note the process of strengthening bonds with the states of Central and Eastern Europe

¹⁵ The National Defence Act of 11 March 2022, Journal of Laws of 2022 item 655.

¹⁶ The expenditure amounted to almost 4% of GDP, which was twice as much as NATO's declared target (2% GDP). On the other hand, the expenditure assigned for new arms and equipment for soldiers within the Technical Modernization Plan for the years 2021-2035 amounted to 524 billion PLN.

¹⁷ *National Security Strategy*, National Security Bureau's (BBN) <https://www.bbn.gov.pl/ftp/dokumenty/Strategia_Bezpieczenstwa_Narodowego_RP_2020.pdf> [accessed: 26.01.2024].

through establishing the Three Seas' Initiative, active and decisive policy attitude towards building support for Ukraine when facing the Russian aggression, intensive activities in the so-called "Budapest Nine", "Riga Four", "Poland-Romania-Turkey Trilogue" and "Lublin Triangle".

Poland was one of the most active states involved in diplomatic action towards Russia after its aggression on Ukraine. Our diplomatic activity resulted in suspending Russia as a member state of the UN Human Rights Council and the World Tourism Organization, as well as blocking its application to numerous managing bodies of the United Nations system¹⁸.

In 2016 it was decided that NATO would maintain its Forward Presence (FP) on the Eastern Flank and since that time the ballistic missile defence base has been being built in Redzikowo, which is eventually going to be a part of the NATO anti-missile protection system. In 2019 the US Army Land Forces Forward Command was established in Poznań.

- „Resetting” the Polish-Russian relations. This motif was clearly aimed at the most important competitor during the election campaign, which was the Civic Coalition. It was based on the assumption that in the years 2007-2015 the then-current government (formed by the PO-PSL coalition) was striving to warm up the relations with the Russian Federation, contrary to the social expectations, especially after the Smolensk crash.

- „The policy of the PO-PSL government was grounded in this sphere on the assumption of clientism, or ‘flowing in the main current’, which meant giving up Poland’s *raison d’état* and adopting a naïve perception of the European Union, which resulted in subordinating the interests of Central and Eastern Europe to the German-French vision. At the same time, the transatlantic bonds with the United States were gradually loosened, to make room for the policy of reset in Germany’s relations with Russia”¹⁹.

One of the most powerful elements of this threat was the disclosure of the old defence doctrine, according to which, in case of the Russian aggression, defence lines would be established on the Vistula River. This assumption was interpreted by PiS politicians as a deliberate plan for the protection of only Western and Central Poland, without taking into account, or even at the cost of, the whole Eastern part.²⁰

Undoubtedly, the issues of energy policy would also largely influence the state’s security level. In this respect, the PiS campaign committee made a clear declaration of liberation from Russian natural resources, since “the contemporary history of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe clearly proved the fact that Russia treats its energy resources as one of the instruments of its political influence expansion”²¹. Some of the achievements quoted here were the „Baltic Pipe”

¹⁸ KW PiS Programme, *Bezpieczna przyszłość Polaków...*, p. 101.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 84

²⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 84-85

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 103

investment (a system of gas pipelines connecting Poland, Denmark and Norway); establishing gas connections with Lithuania and Slovakia and expansion of the LNG terminal in Świnoujście. One of the most complex issues (yet most attractive for the mass media at the same time) was the consolidation of fuel companies: Orlen, Energa, Lotos and PGNiG. PiS campaign committee made it clear that thanks to the party's thoughtful energy policy, the share prices of the Polish multi-energy concern grew multifold while the share of the Russian gas in the whole Polish import fell from around 86% in 2012 to around 50% in 2021. Moreover, several legal regulations were passed which aimed at enabling the construction of the first nuclear power plant. In a longer perspective, it was declared that the state's energy system would rest on three pillars: nuclear power plants, renewable energy resources and sustained coal mining.

The political programme of the PiS campaign committee was in line with the Nationwide Referendum organized on the election day²², which (out of its four questions) comprised two directly related to security issues: „Do you support liquidation of the barrier on the border between the Republic of Poland and the Republic of Belarus?” (Question 3) and „Do you support accepting thousands of illegal immigrants from the Near East and Africa, according to the forced displacement mechanism imposed by the European bureaucracy?” (Question 4).

Civic Coalition Campaign Committee

The Civic Coalition campaign committee (KKWKO), made up of four parties (Civic Platform, Modern, Greens, Polish Initiative and Agrounia social and political movement) issued its so-called “100 concrete facts” as its election programme on 9 September 2023²³. This 34-page document contained three proposals in its “Security” section, two of which were related to verifying and penalizing alleged improprieties of the management of Police for specific actions, while one promised to finance the protection of the Polish state border with Belarus and closing down of the smuggling route from the Near East. These postulates are quoted verbatim below:

1. We will make Commander-in-Chief of Police accountable for actions violating the legal order, such as, for instance, the use of Anti-Terrorist Operations Bureau to suppress demonstrations, including women's strikes, as well as other actions aimed at opposition, all done upon political commission.
2. We will make accountable chiefs of those police units in which permanent power abuse and execution of political commissions took place: dispatching police forces and means to party bureaus and politicians' homes, “surveillance” of activists and opposition politicians by uniformed and non-uniformed police patrols.

²² The National Election Commission's website <<https://pkw.gov.pl/wybory-i-referenda/referenda-ogolnokrajowe/referendum-ogolnokrajowe-w-2023nbsp>> „Referendum 2023”, [accessed 26.01.2024].

²³ KO website <<https://100konkretow.pl/>> „100 konkretów”, [accessed: 1.12.2023].

3. We will secure EU funding for the protection of the Polish border with Belarus. We will close down the smuggling route from the Near East via Belarus to Poland and further on to the EU²⁴.

Apart from these, the “National Defence” section contained seven more postulates mainly related to the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland and (partially) other uniformed forces. Special attention, again, was devoted to “accountability” of the then-current right-wing government. A declaration was made that soldiers dismissed after 2015 could return to service and uniformed pensioners who lost their pension rights by the force of the act lowering pensions of old-age pensioners with employment history in the Secret Service (“Ustawa dezubekizacyjna”)²⁵ would regain their pensions. Civic Coalition also declared audits in the army (especially in relation to purchases and public tenders) as well as in the institutions subordinated to the Ministry of Home Affairs and Administration in relation to the use of wiretapping. Finally, declarations were made for special protection of the „Polish uniform”, continuation of the modernization of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland and urgent joining of the European anti-missile programme, so-called *European Sky Shield* (ESS).

Third Way Coalition Campaign Committee

The Third Way coalition campaign committee (KKW TD) was made up of two parties: Szymon Hołownia’s Poland 2050 (PL 2050) and Polish People’s Party (PSL). Upon establishment of the coalition no joint programme was announced by the campaign committee. Instead, six postulates (collectively termed “Common List of Matters” „#Wspólna Lista Spraw”)²⁶ were put forward, however, with no declarations referring to security or defence. It needs to be mentioned, though, that the introduction to this rather short document contains a fragment which emphasizes the significance of the matter as follows:

[...] When facing Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, we find it necessary to raise the potential of Poland’s military security. We share a conviction that strong Poland has its right place in the European Union and NATO, where it has to play an active and decision-making role rather than become involved in futile quarrels resulting in loss of billions of zlotys from the Recovery Fund²⁷.

²⁴ Civic Coalition campaign committee website, < Program Koalicji Obywatelskiej: Bezpieczeństwo (100konkretow.pl)>, „100 konkretów”, [accessed: 6.12.2023] (original spelling).

²⁵ The Act was passed on 16 December 2016 (Journal of Laws of 2016 item 2270). It aimed at lowering old-age pensions and sick pensions of persons who were employed in institutions „working for the system of the totalitarian state”. It affected more than 40,000 people employed in the uniformed formations between 22 July 1944 and 31 July 1990, who have been receiving lower pensions since 1 October 2017.

²⁶ KKW TD website <kkw Trzecia Droga Polska 2050 Szymona Hołowni - Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe>, „#Wspólna Lista Spraw”, [accessed: 21.12.2023].

²⁷ Ibidem

In mid-September the coalition's member parties worked out an extended version of the postulates which were announced in another, 7-page programme document entitled "12 guarantees of the Third Way"²⁸. The final (12th) point of the document referred to the issues of security, in particular, to modernization of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland, purchases for the army made in the Polish defence industry and separating the managing function from the army commanding function of the Minister of National Defence. A declaration of joining the European Sky Shield (ESS) was also included.

12. Modern army. 50% of expenditure for modernization of the Polish army to the Polish defence industry.

Let's be strong with what we produce" is a motto that lies at the foundation of our security policy. We are going to introduce a rule that at least 50% of military equipment would be bought from companies and factories operating in Poland. We will expand the capacity of the Polish Defence Industry. While purchasing arms abroad, we will ensure necessary offset agreements and establish servicing capacity at home. We will make sure the Polish Defence Industry joins international projects, including the construction of the European air defence system. We will pass over managing the army to the hands of independent and competent professionals. We will make a real separation of the army commanding function from the managing function of the Minister of Defence while retaining civil control over the army. No more party affiliations in the army. The Territorial Defence Forces will be subsumed under the Armed Forces command, they will no longer be hand-manned by the Minister of National Defence²⁹.

It should be stressed that the individual party programme of the Polish People's Party (spanning 48 pages) made a wider coverage of the party's priorities in the area of defence policy, the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland and security. Chapter 10, which was devoted to those matters, deals with, among others, development of the national arms industry, incorporation of the Territorial Defence Forces under the Army's command, development of the Military Health Service, as well as increasing the personnel number (especially the forces of privates and non-commissioned officers), establishing new military units, establishing an unmanned army component and supporting Voluntary Fire Service units from the Ministry of Defence's budget³⁰.

On 25 August 2023 in Łowicz KKW TD held its congress entitled "Security Foremost", which was fully devoted to the issues of security. A more comprehensive programme of the Third Way in relation to the matters of state security was presented then. Its major assumptions are as follows:

²⁸ Ibidem.

²⁹ Ibidem

³⁰ Confer PSL website <<https://www.psl.pl/>> „Program PSL”, pp. 38-39 [accessed: 26.01.2024].

1) Separation of politics and defence: the army is to be managed by competent professionals; 2) Development of Poland's defence potential by emphasising the Air Protection System; 3) Strengthening of the Polish Defence Industry (PPO), by guaranteeing that PPO will be either a producer or co-producer of the new arms³¹. It was underlined that „wise development” of defence should be one of the priorities these days, with Russia's war with Ukraine going on. One of the KW TD leaders and president of the Poland 2050 party, Szymon Hołownia, stated that in the recent years the army and state forces were politically involved and used for the accomplishment of party objectives and dissemination of pro-government propaganda. He also underlined the significance of internal peace as follows: „The Polish-Polish war needs to be over. This is what our security depends upon today.”³². The second leader of the coalition and chairman of PSL, Władysław Kosiniak-Kamysz, proposed three guarantees and security regulations for Poland: „Firstly, we need a modernized and well-organized army. Secondly, we have to be strong in those alliances which we are a member of, in the European Union and NATO. Thirdly, or perhaps first and foremost, we always have to be a community as a nation³³.

New Left Campaign Committee

The New Left Campaign Committee (KW NL) was created as a result of a merger of two political groups: the Democratic Left Alliance (Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej) and the Spring (Wiosna) party. The committee published a 48-page programme with 155 proposals on its official website. The whole document is a list of bulleted headlines and declarations divided into 17 chapters (categories)³⁴. One of these is entitled “Secure Poland” with seven items. These comprise, among others, an interesting proposal for the establishment of a body coordinating the system of cyberspace protection and a set of solutions strengthening personal data protection and child protection against online threats:

104. Cyber-security

We will set up a Cyber-security Agency, which will coordinate the domestic system of cyberspace protection. We will provide more funds and people for the Personal Data Protection Office. We will introduce online security education classes starting from primary school to improve children's protection against online threats. We will introduce a set of solutions to prevent surveillance and illegal use of personal data by state secret services and private corporations³⁵.

³¹ KW TD website, Bezpieczeństwo naprawdę | Polska 2050 Szymona Hołowni, [accessed: 26.01.2024].

³² Łowicz24.pl website, <https://lowicz24.eu/arttykul/lowicz-kongres-polski/1470179>, [accessed: 26.01.2024].

³³ Ibidem

³⁴ KW NL website <<https://klub-lewica.org.pl/program>> „Program wyborczy”, [accessed: 1.12.2023].

³⁵ Ibidem, items 104-105, 108-109.

Other proposals were increasing control over operational activity of the secret services (also in reference to privacy and personal data); promising establishment of a Central Police Monitoring Bureau as an independent unit responsible for overseeing operational activity of this formation, as well as modernizing the structures of Police (e.g., introducing service terms for Commander-in-Chief of the Police or providing more equipment to police officers).

As regards defence plans, the New Left proposed further modernization of the army while making sure the Polish defence industry is commissioned to provide arms and maintaining a professional army without enforced conscription. Declarations of building the European armed forces were made, which would complement the NATO forces and Poland's army in case of a military conflict. Salary rise was promised for all uniformed services, both uniformed and non-uniformed personnel. Moreover, regulation of the "legal-structural status" and continuation of the modernization programmes were announced.

The party also proposed implementing the Nordic model of civilian population security, which encompasses bringing back to operation a full defence infrastructure network (among others, shelters, escape routes or medicine storages) as well as establishing the Civil Defence Service as a body coordinating all activities related to civilian population defence.

107. Civilian population defence

We will implement a model of comprehensive defence capability in the Nordic format. We will restore the infrastructure network used for civilian population protection: shelters, water intake areas, medicine storages or escape routes. We will establish the Civil Defence Service, which will be made responsible for coordination and implementation of all actions related to civilians' protection, such as education, drilling and readiness watch. We will take determined action to strengthen cooperation between institutions which diagnose and monitor hybrid, digital, health and natural threats³⁶.

Confederation Liberty and Independence Campaign Committee

The Confederation Liberty and Independence Campaign Committee (KW Konfederacja) issued a relatively broad, 116-page long, programme entitled „Constitution of Freedom”³⁷. Chapter Six entitled “Secure Borders” was fully devoted to the issues of defence and security. Its authors state that over the last few years, governments had overestimated the significance of international alliances, which would not replace the state's own defence potential when facing a real threat. At the same time, governments were believed to neglect the national army. The document listed the following priorities of the defence policy: 1) Effective spending of public funds for equipping, modernizing and training the army (with special attention devoted to investment in the Polish defence industry); 2) Promoting pro-defence attitudes and

³⁶ Ibidem, item 107.

³⁷ KW Konfederacja website <Konfederacja_WiN_Program_2023_Internet>, „Program” [accessed: 10.12.2023].

weapons possession culture; 3) Participation in alliances and organizations.

KW Konfederacja puts to the very front its proposal of so-called rationalized weapons possession, supporting the claim with statistical indicators of firearm possession in different European countries. In this context, Poland is very low in the ranking of firearm possession and familiarity (25 firearm units per 1,000 citizens, for comparison, in Finland more than 320 units, while in Switzerland, Norway or Austria more than 250³⁸). The political group tried to convince its potential voters that facilitating access to weapons is a relatively simple and effective method of improving national security. Rationalization should be about implementing clear and objective criteria for granting firearms licences, as well as transferring the register of private firearms holders from the central level to the communal one. In a longer perspective, training infrastructure and educational network (shooting facilities, trainings, competitions, etc.) should be created.

The second proposal was about the activation of citizens, e.g., through expanding the military training offer for interested civilians as well as through improving the quality of trainings for reserve personnel which are organized by the Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland.

When faced with an ongoing crisis behind our Eastern border, the state authorities may not miss the opportunity to direct a new-born patriotic feeling of citizens into a well-structured framework of military and civilian protection trainings, as well as to make an attractive (also in financial terms) offer to join the professional army or the Territorial Defence Forces³⁹.

Moreover, the party proposed a gradual and real increase in the number of professional army and the Territorial Defence Forces personnel. The document authors pinpointed several marketing activities undertaken so far by the authorities which did not result in actual change.

Another crucial matter is military spending. According to the party, designating relatively large sums for this category does not make the situation sufficiently clear due to the ineffective allocation of funds. As it was stressed in the document, „(...) there is no coherent, long-term policy, while military spending is used as yet another instrument of an ongoing struggle for voters' support”⁴⁰. On the other hand, the priorities should be placed on strengthening air defence, so-called “emergency purchases”, trainings in the operation of unmanned flying vehicles and drones as well as reconnaissance and intelligence.

The final issue raised in the discussed chapter is illegal immigration. Confederation campaign committee is of the opinion that Poland should strengthen its borders' protection as much as possible, to defend access to the country's territory in both physical and procedural manner:

³⁸ Ibidem, p. 69.

³⁹ Ibidem, p. 71.

⁴⁰ Ibidem, p. 73.

Protection of the state's territory requires multi-faceted actions: expanding permanent border protection infrastructure, strengthening the Border Guard and improving the efficiency of procedures of revealing and relegating illegal immigrants⁴¹.

It should be stressed at this point that security issues were also raised by the party in other chapters of the programme, regardless of the major topics discussed. For instance, Chapter Five deals with proposals for agriculture, however, with the emphasis placed on food security. At the same time, Chapter Seven dealing with energy issues also refers to the concept of security, this time in reference to Poland's economic dependence upon energy imports from other EU countries.

Summary And Conclusions

Right-wing and centre-right parties (Law and Justice campaign committee and Confederation campaign committee) issued long programme documents which are, at the same time, their worldview manifestos. For PiS this document is a detailed description of historical conditions and key values that surely create the context and explain the decisions taken, documentation of actions, initiatives and achievements to date, as well as proposals for a distant future (up to 2031 and even further). PiS made the category of security a priority axis around which its programme was built. This is evidenced already by the title "Secure Future for the Poles" and the use of the word "security" more than 160 times in the whole document. Almost every area of social and economic life makes reference to security and defence policy in a coherent framework of four so-called "pillars": 1. Objection to imperialistic aspirations of the Russian Federation; 2. Cautious policy towards Germany which is economically linked to Russia; 3. Strong cooperation in the Central and Eastern European region; 4. Strong cooperation with the United States as a guarantee of European security. Much space is devoted by the party to military security issues: expansion of the army, establishment of new military units, technical modernization and military purchases, promotion of the army, restoration of the potential of the Navy, as well as expansion of alliances within NATO. Most proposals related to security and defence policy are the continuation of programmes implemented by the United Right (Zjednoczona Prawica) governments in the years 2015-2023. The proposals form a coherent whole, with consistent and logical reasoning and accurate diagnoses.

The attitude of the Confederation Liberty and Independence campaign committee can be surprising for those who associate this group with extremist views and media coverage. In congruence with the spirit of the party, the whole programme document is dominated by suspicious attitudes towards both the EU bodies and the state authorities. However, the proposals of Confederation are relatively moderate. In terms of security and defence policy they make a strong statement in favour of the party's old proposal of shaping "pro-defensive attitudes

⁴¹ Ibidem, p. 74.

and weapons possession culture". This argument is supported by interesting data and comparative analyses. Confederation also proposed expanding Poland's military potential, for instance, through continuous development of the Territorial Defence Forces. Much space was also devoted to explaining the party's attitude towards the migration crisis, strong objection towards the mechanisms of immigrant displacement to Poland and tightening border protection. This area best demonstrates the party's extreme attitude towards the state matters. The proposals include, among others, withdrawal of social rights for immigrants, limiting entry permissions to Poland, unconditional expulsion of immigrants working illegally and breaking the law from the country or even giving priority to Polish citizens in such processes as university admission.

The left-wing campaign committees were in favour of shorter programme statements with rather sketchy declarations, often phrased as items and 1-2 sentence proposals. The programme document of the biggest opposition party, KKW KO, entitled "100 Concrete Facts", was prepared in a way which was attractive for marketing purposes: emotional, populist and propagandist. This is evidenced by both the short presentation format and quite a peculiar linguistic realization: catchy slogans, infrequent reference to more general matters and more frequent to specific situations (even names of the very people to be "held accountable", which should be an "emergency alert" for ethicists, guardians of equity and human rights as no aversions may justify damaging individuals' reputation and individual dignity in such a wide public forum⁴²) and confrontative or even attacking tone of the message. The proposals were phrased in such a way that most of all inappropriate decisions of the outgoing government are pinpointed and the purpose of "holding accountable" ("controlling", "auditing") most actions, institutions and decisions from the recent years. Each page of the document features the heading "We will make PiS accountable", and this very slogan should be viewed as the axis of the whole election campaign. Out of 10 proposals from the "Security" and "Defence" categories as many as four referred only to accountability and control (of the management of Police, the army, arms purchases and public tenders, promotions, other institutions and actions of the Ministry of Home Affairs and Administration). Three others enumerated those decisions that were regarded by KKW KO as inappropriate, such as releasing soldiers from service on the force of the act together with depriving them of some pension benefits and using the Polish Armed Forces for political purposes. Thus, it can be assumed that security as such was the topic of only the remaining three proposals of the party. The first one concerns financing protection of Poland's border with Belarus and closing down the smuggling route from the Near East; the second referred to the modernization of the Polish army (here acquiring six more Patriot batteries, a large number of multi-role and combat

⁴² As it is stated in Article 47 of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland, everyone has the right to legal protection of private and family life, good name and reputation, as well as to taking decisions about their personal life on their own. Reputation is termed interchangeably as good name, honour, dignity or reputation, and its infringement can be regarded as the crime of defamation.

helicopters, state-of-the-art drones and other elements of air defence), while the third one – urgent joining the allied anti-missile European programme (so-called *European Sky Shield*).

In its flagship proposals collected in the “Common List of Matters” and the so-called “Twelve Guarantees”, the Third Way campaign committee treated the issue of security in an unelaborated, or even marginal, manner. “The Common List of Matters” does not actually contain any proposals related to that area except for one, very general declaration of necessity for increasing Poland’s military capacity when faced with a war going on behind our Eastern border. On the other hand, in the “Twelve Guarantees” document only the final item referred to the issue of army modernization. Even the party’s congress, entitled „Security Actually”, did not bring any specific declarations as was expected, instead, a number of highly general and expected statements were uttered, whose focus was placed on the proposal of “reconciling the internally conflicted nation”. While one can come to terms with only the promotional nature of the election programme of the Third Way coalition campaign committee (after all, election polls estimated support for this party at 5-7% and gaining over 14% of votes on the election day came as a surprise even for the very party leaders), such an approach is difficult to understand in case of the biggest opposition party, the Civic Coalition campaign committee. After having lost the 2015 parliamentary election and then presidential election twice, the party did not develop a comprehensive programme that would be some kind of summary of its rule, a vehicle to broadcast its worldview, its attitude to history, its vision for the country’s development, an important element of building its image, finally, the most essential means of communication with potential voters. Unfortunately, the party’s programme lacked specific proposals and solutions which could remedy the ineffective actions of the opponents (in the programme authors’ view).

When confronted with the Civic Coalition campaign committee, the New Left campaign committee appears to be slightly better. Even though the latter’s programme is a list of “items”, it does contain a chapter devoted to security. The proposals are phrased in a sketchy and sometimes populist way (such as, for instance, offering salary rise to uniformed and non-uniformed personnel of the uniformed forces) but, still, some interesting new ideas can be found there as well. For instance, the party drew the public attention to the significant problems of cybersecurity, including protection of the youngest Internet users and the need for efficient protection of personal data. Another innovative proposal was restoration of the infrastructure network used for civilians’ protection: shelters, water intake areas, medicine storages or escape routes. Thus, it can be stated that the security-related proposals included in the programme document of the New Left campaign committee are not a detailed plan, but rather a more general vision. At the same time, this coherent vision could be developed and made more detailed in favourable circumstances.

To conclude, it is beyond doubt that the most coherent and the most comprehensive proposal for security and defence policy was presented during the election campaign to the Polish Parliament by the Law and Justice campaign

committee. It was followed by the Confederation Liberty and Independence campaign committee, while the last place was taken *ex aequo* by the remaining parties which gained parliamentary mandates: the Third Way, the Civic Coalition and the New Left campaign committees.

The analysis of party programmes in terms of security issues started with the following research questions: Do campaign committees make reference to the issues of security in their proposals, given a dynamically changing security context in the local, regional and global dimensions, in particular with Russia's aggression on Ukraine and migration crisis in Europe? If yes, how are such issues defined? These research questions led to the formulation of the hypothesis that taking into account the circumstances, the security issues will find their multi-faceted realization in party declarations during the 2023 Polish parliamentary elections campaign by virtually all committees. Taking into account the results of the analysis, the answer is positive in reference to all parties as all of them, to a greater or lesser extent, dealt with the issues of security in their programme documents. There are significant differences, though, in the way the hypothesis can be verified. As regards left-wing and centre-left groups the hypothesis is verified negatively, as these committees either did not define the category of security at all or treated it in a highly general and sketchy way, without going into details. On the other hand, in case of right-wing and centre-right parties the hypothesis was verified positively: right-wing parties included the issues of security in their programmes and made them a key element for the development of our country. The issues of security were dealt with in a detailed and multi-faceted way, taking into account the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war and the migration crisis in Europe. Thus, if we were to conclude only on the basis of the analysis of programme documents and the degree of their specification, we would state that right-wing and centre-right politicians have much greater awareness and knowledge of security issues (together with potential threats), understand these in a more holistic way as a system of interconnected and communicating vessels, touching upon almost every single sphere of social and economic life.

However, taking into account sociological research, the assumption that the level of knowledge and awareness of certain threats can only be diagnosed on the basis of the party's programme would be a gross oversimplification. Moreover, each conclusion leads to further questions, which is also the case here. Most of all, the following question arises: How important are traditional proposals written in programmes for voters? Another question is how large proportion of voters might have read the programme documents issued by the parties taking part in the election. Perhaps the reason why these documents are in most cases highly general, lack coherence and detail is that official party programmes are more of a relic of the past. In other words, contemporary voters might not be willing to read long documents on their own – instead, they might prefer to be provided with a digest of the proposals, which can be quickly grasped just like many other pieces of news every day. This might be the reason why those parties that prepared “mini-programmes” of a more catchy and marketing nature, evoking emotions, proved to

be more clever and resourceful in the struggle for victory. These considerations can lead to further conclusions which could trigger new research in the field of political communication.

The first such conclusion is as follows: political groups of right-wing and conservative profile have a different approach to issues of security from left-wing and liberal parties. The former made issues of security a key and very broad theme, which was intertwined with almost any other category of discussed issues. On the other hand, the latter parties made only scarce reference to this topic, emphasising for instance social issues or accountability of the previous government. This conclusion is supported by the results of the research undertaken almost exactly a decade ago in reference to security issues in free-of-charge election radio broadcasts during the European Parliament election campaign. As the researcher, Agnieszka Łukasik-Turecka, stated, „out of 10 election committees entitled to issue broadcasts on the force of the KRRiT decree, only 5 raised the topic of security”⁴³. Interestingly enough, these were far-right, conservative or centre-right groups: the Law and Justice campaign committee, Zbigniew Ziobro’s Sovereign Poland campaign committee, the National Movement campaign committee, Jarosław Gowin’s Poland Together campaign committee (to a limited extent) and the Polish People’s Party campaign committee.

The programme documents issued by conservative committees were dominated by descriptive, long passages, clearly explaining the context of all proposals. The documents prepared by liberal committees, on the contrary, used a more condensed and general format, often with bulleted items. Only this finding could lead to another conclusion: political groups in the election campaign under analysis applied different techniques of political communication: conservative parties went for agitation, education, elements of persuasion; while liberal ones applied political propaganda of a tactical nature (concentrated on gaining quick results)⁴⁴. It should be added here that both forms have their pros and cons. The longer communication format is more of educational than marketing nature, and is directed at different addressees. It does not leave any place for doubt, is more transparent and, as a result, less vulnerable to communication disorders (such as over-simplifications, over-generalizations, fake news, etc.). This format builds features of a positive self-image – stability, consistency, trust. However, its drawback is that it lacks marketing, advertising and emotional quality, which leads to increased efficiency of the election campaign. Moreover, proposals described in greater detail can be the target of negative propaganda from competing parties (such as, for instance, the weapons possession proposal of the Confederation campaign committee). On the other hand, a more succinct mode of political communication

⁴³ A. Łukasik-Turecka, *Problematyka bezpieczeństwa w radiowych reklamach wyborczych kandydatów do Parlamentu Europejskiego na Lubelszczyźnie w 2014 roku* [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo Europy i Unii Europejskiej w czasach kryzysu*, ed. M.a Musiał-Karg, Poznań 2016.

⁴⁴ Confer. M. Kornacka-Grzonka, *Propaganda polityczna* [in:] *Komunikowanie polityczne w teorii i praktyce*, eds. P. Kuca, W. Furman, Rzeszów 2023.

is more vulnerable to information disorders, such as fake news, disinformation, excessive over-generalization and over-simplification of statements, or even often populist tonality. Understated or undefined information is conducive to flexible interpretation, be it during the campaign period or right after the election, when voters would like to make a particular party "accountable" for its promises. If proposals are phrased as "slogans", even the catchiest ones from the marketing perspective, the real worldview of the party is very difficult to define. It is equally challenging to analyse the decision-making process behind such proposals as well as to assess how realistic the accomplishment of a particular election promise actually is (from the legal and financial perspective). Undoubtedly, a more succinct programme presentation format has its advantages, especially important in today's world dominated by new media (online and social ones) governed by quick, short and easily digestible information. It has numerous marketing, advertising and emotional qualities which make the message quicker to reach the addressee, more durable in their memory, and as a result more effective.⁴⁵ Besides, understatement can be easily developed in more favourable circumstances (e.g., after the election) in a way that would be adapted to the needs of setting up a coalition or taking binding decisions on the international forum.

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