

**BULGARIAN SECURITY POLICY:
ALTERNATIVES AND CHOICE**

by Tsvetan Tsvetkov

HARMONIE PAPER 9

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The Centre for European Security Studies is an independent and non-profit foundation engaged in research, education and training on foreign policy and security affairs affecting the whole of Europe. A key mission is to promote democratic structures and decision-making procedures in this field, especially throughout Central and Eastern Europe where it works to support those organisations and individuals striving to establish civil societies under the rule of law. By facilitating a comprehensive process of learning, it aims to contribute to mutual understanding on all security matters, thus helping to build a stable all-European order.

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FOREWORD

By Peter Volten

When the Centre for European Security Studies (CESS) first approached the Volkswagen Foundation to seek funding for our European Fellowship Programme (EFP), we stressed two features of our scheme. One was the opportunity we wished to provide: for scholars from Central and Eastern European countries (CEECs) to examine an aspect of their own nation's transition in the defence field, under our professional supervision and with a period of 'study abroad' in the Netherlands. The other was the results we could expect: authoritative, original research on *civil-military relations* and *security policy-making* in CEECs – the two themes on which we decided the EFP should focus – and hence valuable additions to an English-language literature on these subjects which had been dominated hitherto by general (and often superficial) essays by Western analysts.

In terms of these aims, the programme has succeeded beyond our expectations. It is now in its final months, but by the end of 1999 some 25 fellows will have taken part in it and most will have seen their work published in this monograph series. For this success I have to thank all those members of my staff who have been involved in the exercise. In particular, I must mention EFP Co-ordinator Sipke de Hoop, who has been responsible for the selection of Fellows and overall management of the programme since early 1997; Joost Herman, who fulfilled this role at the start of the venture in 1996/97; and our administrators – Elena Herman and, later, Joke Venema – who have provided office support for everyone and much practical help to the Fellows themselves.

Coming from CEECs, our Fellows have faced the formidable challenge of writing-up their research in English, which for each of them has been a second language (or even a third). All have risen to this challenge, some impressively. Not surprisingly, however, their final submissions have required careful editing prior to publication. The lion's share of this demanding and time-consuming work has fallen to David Greenwood, Research Director at CESS. To him we owe a substantial debt for the effort he has expended in 'helping authors to say what it is they have to say' (in his own formulation). Thanks are also due to Sergei Malkin – and, latterly, Elzaline Schraa – for undertaking the final preparation of copy for our printer.

One last debt of gratitude I must acknowledge is to the Volkswagen Foundation, for providing the academic venture capital that made our programme possible. This was a courageous investment; but it has yielded regular dividends, of which this volume is a good example.

Turning to the present text, Tsvetan Tsvetkov's study is the first that we have published by a Fellow who took the option of examining an aspect of *security policy-making* in his country. What prompted the inquiry was the author's conviction that, in formulating policy for the post-Cold War world, Bulgaria needed to find an

alternative approach to that adopted during the decades of one-party rule. What he set out to discover was whether the kind of formal methods to aid decision-making (choice) developed by management science might be applied to the defence arena. Could one find here guidelines for rational selection among policy alternatives?

What the analysis reveals is that – in the security field as elsewhere – public choice is quite unlike business decision-making. The application of fashionable techniques for the evaluation of policy options is, therefore, highly problematical and impractical. In particular, defining interests and objectives is a major challenge, as in the specification of criteria for choice. Professor Tsvetkov has tackled these problems and produced a useful insight into what knowledgeable Bulgarians attach importance to in this respect. He has had to conclude, however, that defence policy-making must be regarded as an art rather than a science; and that the scope for directly applying decision theory here is strictly limited.

In sum, then, this is a study which raise more questions than it answers. It is nevertheless a useful contribution to the literature on transition in Central and Eastern Europe. Bulgaria's circumstances are by no means unique; nor are the problems which a new generation of policy analysts like Tsvetan Tsvetkov is having to confront, and to which they are beginning to find their own solutions.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Republic of Bulgaria is changing its model of security policy. One thing is completely clear: that used for the last four decades is not usable any more. Bulgarian society must therefore choose a new model – which will serve national interests, which will provide an acceptable level of security for all citizens, and which can be applied with limited resources.

Before considering what might be 'the best' choice under existing political, social and economic circumstances, it is necessary to answer a number of different questions. First, what should be the procedure to take such a substantial political decision, which affects all strata of society and every citizen? Are current procedures suitable? Second, what are the policy options? Are there options which are out of politicians' and observers' vision but ought to be considered? Third, what are the criteria for choice, which are acceptable to all political forces and interest groups, and which truly reflect society's interests? Fourth, how should one evaluate options in terms of these criteria in order to find 'the best' alternative?

Security policy-making in a free democratic society is a difficult and time-consuming process. The factors to be considered – external and internal, political, military and economic – are mostly qualitative. The decision environment is poorly structured, and it is difficult to predict the costs and benefits of one or another decision. Mature democracies possess significant experience in this area, but it is hard to apply it in other conditions.

Analysis of the policy-making process in Bulgaria reveals familiar characteristics. There are many actors. Their activities are dictated by different interests. There is a lack of systematic and sequential decision-making, and a lack of continuity between different governments. Political decision-makers do not show much interest in experts' opinions or the views of non-governmental organisations concerned with security problems. There is no tradition of using polls and surveys to gauge public opinion. There is no tradition of engaging the media to inform citizens about events, policies and issues. There is a clear need for systematic and structured strategic information, processed by experts, which can be used by every actor in security policy formulation. Finally, national interests and objectives are not formulated at all, or are formulated very broadly; also politicians avoid stating explicitly what they regard as the threats to national security.

Furthermore, there is no clear understanding in the country about a very important detail in security policy-making: what should be the criteria for decision-making. This is important for many reasons. First, it is possible to formulate various quite different criteria, with fundamentally different consequences for policy choice. Second, each actor in security policy-making has a different value system and, consequently, a different criteria preference. It is hard to find a decision that will satisfy all of them. Third, it is difficult to quantify many criteria. If the objective is to maximise profit or minimise costs, problems are solvable. But, if the goal is to influence citizens' feeling of security, it is not possible to measure this on any known scale. In any case, criteria are apprehended mostly subjectively. Each actor assesses accomplishments differently.

In this work the view taken is, that criteria for policy decision-making must be connected with two groups of 'objects' which will be investigated separately. In the first group there are objects like national interests, aspirations, current policy goals and aims. In the second group are placed threats to Bulgarian national security.

The purpose of the study is not to specify the most advisable security policy for the country. It is to discover whether, and if so how, the kind of systematic – and when possible quantitative – approach to decision-making that is discussed in the literature of management science can be applied to a country's security policy-making and planning; and to test this by reference to Bulgaria. The basic aims of the work are to review selected approaches; to examine defence tasks in formal (theoretical) terms and identify an approach to defence choice by use of 'management science' techniques; to conduct a survey of professional/expert opinion in Bulgaria as a means of estimating the parameters for 'management science' models, and use this information in a formal analysis; and finally to draw conclusions for Bulgarian security policy-making and planning.

Information sources used in the research include official speeches, statements and articles by Bulgarian politicians, plus articles by observers and experts in the security area. Also literature has been consulted to identify what mature democracies understand by 'national interests', 'objectives', 'aims', 'tasks', and so on in the political sphere. In addition a small survey of expert opinion has been conducted, to generate information about criteria prioritisation.

The first section of the text contains a theoretical view of the security policy decision-making process. This process is investigated from a 'management science' point of view. This reveals that the process of choice among options is also an example of taking a very specific political decision. Therefore it is necessary to describe this specificity, as well as showing how one might formulate possibilities and constraints in order to use quantitative methods.

The second section concerns national interests, aspirations, current policy goals and aims. The purpose is to discover how objectives are articulated and which interests and objectives can be used as decision criteria under specific Bulgarian circumstances.

The subject of the third section is threats to the Bulgarian security environment. Threats are perceived as objects, strongly interdependent with objectives. A reason for existence of a threat is existence of an objective. If in a particular area there is no objective, there cannot be a threat. For example, the hypothetical threat of cross-border aggression exists, because there are aspirations to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country. Two parameters are used to assess the intensity of threats: the probability of the relevant threatening event occurring and the scale of the negative effect in case an event should occur. The purpose is to discover which threats can be used as decision criteria under specific Bulgarian circumstances.

The final section deals with the results of the experts' opinion survey. Using a simple mathematical technique it is possible to generalise experts' opinions on the relative importance of interests, objectives, aims and threats, to rank them, and to measure consistency. In other words the survey highlights candidate decision criteria and priorities, plus the degree of consensus attaching to them.

In a few concluding paragraphs the rationale for this exploratory study is restated and some observations are made on the directions in which research and analysis might now proceed.

II. SECURITY POLICY DECISION-MAKING

1. Nature and stages of the policy process

Developing a 'new model' of security policy requires many specific policy choices. The decision-making process cannot be examined without some general understanding of what policy choice involves.

If we accept the assertion that policy is what connects intentions, actions and results, the place of the security policy decision-making process is between intentions and actions. It identifies how and with which actions it is proposed to realise intentions. Therefore the process can be split into the following stages: policy initiation, policy formulation, policy implementation and later policy evaluation.¹

Political decisions can be: decision to take a decision; identification of activities to be done in order to solve a given problem; identification of proper methods and proper time for the activities. If we apply this logic to the security policy sphere, decisions can be: decision to change the existing security model; choice of an appropriate security model; choice of the time to introduce the new model and so on. There are various approaches to such policy initiation and formulation. Usually, they cover the following stages: analysis, identification of problems, selection of criteria, identification of alternative security policies (variables, values, possible combinations), identification of existing constraints, appraisal of alternatives and selection of the preferred security policy. All these stages involve iterations.

The security policy decision-making process has many peculiarities in comparison with decision-making processes in general.

- There is a specific object of management.
- There is a specific list of actors, who take part in preparation and choice of the decision or influence the choice.
- Usually the decision-maker is strongly affected by voters. He occupies an elected position and has to take public opinion into account (in long-term and short-term senses).
- Decision-making and the successful implementation of the decision depend on popular support.
- The decision-maker has to take into account different interests: national, governmental, interest groups, and others.
- The criteria for decision-making are specific. They are highly dependent on the type of decision and the environment (the concrete situation in which the decision is taken).
- The environment is dynamic, changes are difficult to predict, regularities are difficult to identify.

¹ Andrew Heywood, *Politics* (Macmillan, 1997), p.382. (Note that *evaluation* here refers to the chosen policy and not to the appraisal of alternatives as part of the decision-making procedures.)

- The decisions are risky. The risk is determined by the size of the 'stake'. In case of wrong decisions the costs or losses are enormous. In some cases even the existence of the state is in question.
- The decisions are affected by and affect two different areas: the international political environment and the internal situation.
- The decisions are not always taken on objective grounds.

In addition security policy decisions fall into that class of problems that must usually satisfy multiple criteria. This means that in order to take a rational decision one must identify the list of criteria and rank them by priority.

Initiation of the security policy decision-making process usually occurs because of a problem. In the science of management a problem is a difference between the actual and the target status of the system. More specifically, a problem in the security environment is a difference between the target status of the system – assured national security – and its actual status at a particular moment. The actual status at a particular moment is a result of the influence of many, frequently contradictory, internal and external factors and disturbing effects. It is also a result of earlier management.

Problems can be structured, poorly structured or unstructured. Structured problems have alternative solutions, whose parameters are calculable and can be expressed numerically. Solutions in these cases can be found using the techniques of operations research and mathematical modelling. Poorly structured problems are usually connected with the elaboration of long-term decisions that affect different aspects of reality and are implemented by multiple stages. Unstructured problems can be described only with a high level of uncertainty and there are few possibilities for formal description of goals and possible alternatives.

The evaluation (or appraisal) of existing problems can be looked at from different points of view. Of particular interest is the evaluation of problems from the point of view of their importance and the decision-maker's possibilities to affect them. The importance of the problem is determined by the importance of whatever caused it and the extent of the difference between the target and actual values. The possibilities to affect that difference can be assessed by the physical possibility or impossibility for influence and resource requirements to solve the problem.

A criterion provides a basis for appraising the result of choice of any particular option and in this way to compare the alternatives. Usually the political decision-making process is based on multiple criteria. This fact can be explained with the following reasons. First, security policy decisions are not usually taken by a single decision-maker, but by a group of individuals. Every individual has his own set of values and preferences. The interests of the different members of the group are different or very often even contradictory. Therefore, the decision-making procedure must accommodate sometimes contradictory criteria. Secondly, security policy decisions usually affect the interests of numerous groups of people. Thirdly, such decisions are connected with changes in several different aspects of reality.

2. Identification of alternative policies

During the process of solving standard structured problems, identification of the alternatives is not difficult. Alternatives are clear and their number is fixed. However, identification of options for most political decisions is a difficult task. Alternatives can be differentiated by many attributes (variables). Every variable has many possible values. Hence possible combinations are numerous. Furthermore, some alternatives are not evident at first glance. They can be identified only after some analysis. Therefore there is a need to apply specialised techniques for the generation of options.

If we take an analogy with the search for ideas in the business area, we can say that there are two broad approaches to generating options. The first is based on identifying own advantages. The essence of this approach is to identify areas in which the state has specific advantages in comparison with other states – such as geopolitical position, natural resources, climate conditions, developed infrastructure, traditional military and political contacts. The second is general search. This approach is based on discovery of new policy alternatives by analysis of the political and security environment. The sources of new ideas can be: specialists from governmental institutions and NGO's, independent specialists, foreign consultants, opposition political forces, particular citizens or public opinion.

3. Evaluation of alternative policies

The evaluation of alternative policies means the application of criteria to every possibility. The basis for evaluation is a forecast of the effect of implementing the option. By using a score according to every criterion and the relative priority of the criteria the overall rating of the alternative can be calculated. In cases when there are many possibilities, it is reasonable to find (if they exist) so-called dominant alternatives. Alternative A dominates alternative B if it received better or the same scores for every criterion and a better score for at least one criterion. In this case alternative B need not be examined further. Options can be ranked by their overall rating. It should be underlined that this approach gives only a possibility to identify the comparative attractiveness of alternatives by selected and ranked criteria.

The next step is to calculate the level of risk associated with a given choice. The level of risk is only one of many evaluation criteria, but in view of its extreme importance it should be studied separately. To assess risk means to identify, first, what are the possible unfavourable effects of implementation of the alternative? These can find expression in negative external results, not connected with the target variables, or in considerable, differences between real and predicted values of the parameters (going beyond the confidence interval of the calculation). It also requires asking: what is the probability for appearance of the risky events and what is the negative effect of their occurrence?

4. Quantitative methods and experts' surveys

There is a debate about whether it is possible – and if so to what extent – to use quantitative methods and techniques of operations research to support security policy analyses and decisions. The reason for such a debate is the specific nature of political decisions. My personal opinion is that quantitative methods can be applied – and should be applied – in security policy problem-solving (and, indeed, the present study was prompted by a desire to demonstrate this). However, it is necessary to have in mind the specificity of every single decision, the limitations of technique and the assumptions made when using such methods. Many authors have asserted that modelling has an extended role in policy analysis. Thus S.I. Gass writes that 'The analytical methodologies and the objective scientific training of the OR/MS² analysts are most suitable for public sector studies'.³ Another author, who has made significant contributions in the area of tackling complicated and poorly-structured decision problems by application of quantitative techniques, is Thomas Saaty. His opinion is that the basis for a mathematical approach and formal techniques are not yet present in the political sphere. Nevertheless he says '...mathematical formulation of complicated problems points the possible solutions and is conducive to optimal strategy choice'. It is interesting for present purposes that Saaty expressly states the reasons why a problem might not have a mathematical expression.

- The structure of the problem is too complicated and not clear enough.
- The structure of the problem is clear, but it includes uncertainties, and the relevant probabilities cannot be evaluated.
- The event is empirically clear enough, but its theoretical structure is not clear.
- The structure is well known and clear, but the problem cannot be solved even by approximate technique.⁴

Nevertheless he sees the possibilities – even in unpromising cases – to express the probability of one or another activity (one or another alternative) and the extent of achievement of objectives in quantitative terms, by construction of a scale to measure these variables.

Still, the use of quantitative techniques *is* limited by the need for use of different criteria in the process of security policy decision-making. However, contemporary mathematical science has powerful methods to solve such problems. Some authors think that Multiple Criteria Decision Making (MCDM) has been the

² Operations Research/Management Science.

³ S.I. Gass, 'Public Sector Analysis and Operations Research/Management Science' in S.M. Pollock, M.H. Rothkopf and, A. Barnett (eds), *Operations Research and the Public Sector (Handbooks in Operations Research and Management Science, Vol 6)* (North Holland, 1994) p.30.

⁴ Thomas Saaty, *Mathematicheskie modeli konfliktnih situacii (Mathematical models of arms control and disarmament)* (Moscow: Sovetskoe radio, 1977) pp.31-32.

fastest growing area of decision analysis in recent years.⁵ Basic concepts have been elucidated by P.L. Yu.⁶

There remains the difficulty that political decisions are taken not by a single decision-maker but by many who in general have different objectives and interests. The group decision can be based on different principles – consensus or majority. But members' opinions frequently are not equal. However there is so-called voting theory in the area of applied mathematics. Voting theory is a possible instrument for tackling such problems. It 'requires each voter to have internally consistent preferences, but it does not require all of the voters to agree with each other on one set of preferences'.⁷

There are none the less important differences between what will repay a quantitative approach in political science as opposed to the natural sciences. In the natural sciences the approach is based on building theoretical models whose outputs are expected to be exact (or approximately exact) numerical values. One can use any specific measuring scale but the absolute value of the variables is important. In other words, in this case the essence of the approach is to calculate equations in order to reach an exact numerical answer. However, in modelling political situations, quantitative methods require some basis on which to check the correctness of the inevitable qualitative assumptions.

From the point of view of information sources, quantitative information collected during the process of political decision-making can be objective or subjective. Objective information is precious: it is accurate, independent of the individual's opinion and it can be checked for correctness. However, in many cases subjective information, collected by generalisation of experts' judgement, has significant worth. Indeed, it may have some important advantages in comparison with objective indicators.

- Subjective information can be collected in case of lack or unreliability of objective information (for example, when tackling unstructured problems or if there is a need to forecast in a turbulent environment).
- Sometimes objective indicators have only an indirect connection (correlation) with key variables, but experts can answer very precisely formulated direct questions.
- Experts can evaluate the situation at the relevant time, while sometimes it is difficult or impossible to collect reliable objective information for the same moment or period.
- Collection and processing of experts' opinions can be performed under controlled conditions.

⁵ Enrique Balestero, Carlos Romero, 'Multiple Criteria Decision Making: Some Connections with Economic Analysis', in Sixto Rios (ed.), *Decision Theory and Decision Analysis: Trends and Challenges* (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1993), pp.223-232.

⁶ P.L. Yu, 'Multiple Criteria Decision Making: Five Basic Concepts', in G.L. Nemhauser, A.H.G. Rinnooy Kan and M.J. Todd (eds), *Optimization (Handbooks in Operations Research and Management Science, No 1)* (North Holland, 1989) p.663-699.

⁷ L.B. Anderson, 'Voting Theory', in S.M. Pollock, M.H. Rothkopf, A. Barnett (eds) *Operations Research and the Public Sector (Handbooks in Operations Research and Management Science, Vol 6)* (North Holland, 1994) p.561.

- 'Objective' information can be influenced by external factors, unknown to the researcher, which can lead to significant distortion of the results.

At the same time whenever using this technique, it is important to have in mind some limitations. Obviously, experts' judgements are subjective and can be influenced by personal bias. The results of generalisation from experts' judgement are heavily dependent on the choice of experts and the chosen generalisation technique. Moreover, the way questions are formulated can affect the experts' answers.⁸

In order to avoid these limitations in the present research it was decided that experts would not be asked to evaluate elements (objectives, threats and risks, constraints, decision criteria) in absolute value (for example, the priority of a particular decision criterion), but to make comparison in pairs (for example, to compare evaluation criteria in pairs with respect to their relative impact on objectives). In this way a higher level of confidence can be placed in the results. Also experts were chosen among high-level specialists in the area of defence and security who have proved their unbiased attitude. Generalisation of the judgements has been made using a comparatively simple technique from a mathematical point of view, which still gives reliable enough results. At the same time a measure of diffraction (the extent of differences among experts' judgements) has been calculated.

⁸ The identification of advantages is based on: Russel H. Fitzgibbon, 'The use of judges to generate quantitative data' in John E. Mueller (ed.) *Approaches to Measurement in International Relations, a non-evangelical survey* (New York, 1969) pp.249-252.

III. INTERESTS, ASPIRATIONS AND OBJECTIVES IN BULGARIAN SECURITY POLICY FORMULATION

1. Identification of the problem

In management science a decision can be assessed as rational or not rational only from the point of view of a system of objectives accepted by the decision-maker. Objectives play an important role also in the process of political decision-making. However, problems here are extremely difficult for several reasons. First, many actors are involved – both individuals and institutions. In this sense a political decision is a compromise between the interests of all subjects who take part in the policy process. Theoretically, decision-makers must represent the interests and objectives of citizens, state and society; but these are not easily formulated. In this study we are just trying to identify key interests and objectives. Second, interests and objectives are in very complicated interdependence. A long-run objective can be achieved by meeting short-term goals and postponing immediate operational tasks.

Following this logic one can construct a hierarchy structure of objects with complex interdependencies within levels as well as between them. For this study a structure valid for Bulgarian realities has been developed, beginning with interests, passing through objectives and reaching concrete short-term aims. It distinguishes among aspirations, objectives of current policy, goals and aims. The hierarchy is depicted in Fig.1.

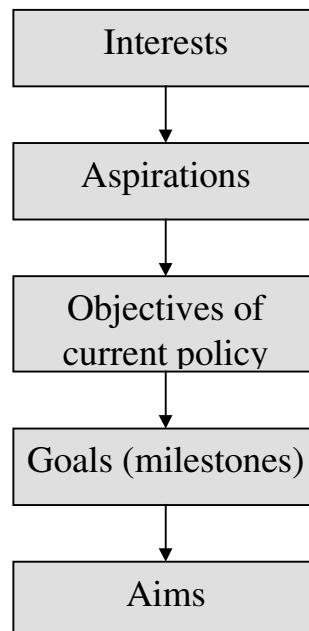


Fig. 1. Hierarchy of interests, aspirations, objectives, goals and aims

The development of this structure in the following pages is based on official political statements and an empirical investigation of experts' attitudes specially undertaken for the present inquiry. This is an exploratory venture, to discover whether it is feasible to establish the necessary basis for systematic, quantitative analysis of options in the defence field.

The first level of the hierarchy contains broadly accepted national interests and values. It is not easy to define national interests. It is even more difficult to measure their priority in order to identify the 'most important' interests. However, there are some broadly accepted interests which can be applied to the case of Bulgaria, such as: national survival as a state, economic vitality and prosperity, preservation of a society's core values.⁹

In contrast to national interests and values¹⁰, other objects can be formulated much more precisely and perceived more readily. Aspirations express national interests and values in a more definite form. In broad sense, national objectives can be formulated as those ends that leaders of states pursue.¹¹ This can be adopted as a working formulation of objectives of current policy. However, it is necessary to add the following. First, policy decision-makers may declare that formulated objectives express the interests and values of the citizens, the society and the state, but this may or may not be true. Second, objects under question may or may not be formulated clearly, they may exist only as vague formulations. Third, they may or may not be endorsed by citizens, by the society¹² and by government institutions.¹³

Thus while analysing interests, aspirations, and objectives it is necessary to observe not only their nature, but also to see how clearly and exactly they are formulated, whether they are accepted by citizens and the society, and to what extent state institutions acknowledge them. Security objectives, of course, have their place in a 'objective tree' among other, non-security objectives. This means that they are dependent on, and influence, not only interests and values but also other, non-security objectives.

2. Interests, aspirations and objectives in the decision-making process

As noted, choice of a model for security policy means reviewing options or alternatives and finding that which best satisfies given criteria. One aspect of options evaluation is congruence with the interests, aspirations and objectives of the society,

⁹ See the discussion in P. Viotti and M.V. Kaupri, *International relations and world politics. Security, Economy: Identity* (Prentice Hall, 1997), p.86.

¹⁰ Here we do not discuss national values. This is too broad a topic for this study.

¹¹ Bruce Russett and Harvey Starr, *World politics : the menu for choice* (5th edition; New York: Freeman, 1996).

¹² The question is whether the objectives are accepted or not by the majority of the citizens, by the political powers, by the interested NGOs and by the independent experts.

¹³ Security policy is formulated by different institutions. Therefore it can be assumed, theoretically, that in some cases it is possible for the system of objectives not to be accepted equally by all government institutions.

the state and citizens. In other words policy benefits can be assessed by measuring the extent to which alternatives 'score' on this test.

Clearly, this is not simple. A particular model may satisfy one object well, and another poorly. For example, a hypothetical model for development of a military alliance with Russia could contribute greatly to the military security of the country at least for a period of some years. At the same time, however, this option would not promote development of economic relations with Western Europe, for example.

This raises the key question: is it possible for models (or alternatives) to be compared in order to choose an optimum? Political decision is matter of compromise. Whichever model is chosen, this means a compromise regarding one interest or objective vis-à-vis other interests and objectives. Analytically, the interesting question is: how many units of satisfaction regarding one object must be given up – after receiving an extra unit of satisfaction of another object – to maintain a constant level of overall satisfaction. This is a question of the marginal rate of substitution between objects (in the terminology of managerial economics). Thus arises the problem of prioritisation. One must assess which interests and objectives are more important for Bulgaria in the existing international political situation and which are less important (i.e. on which of them it is possible to make more serious compromises).

3. Conditions determining Bulgarian interests, aspirations and objectives

The specification of Bulgarian objectives can be observed from at least four points of view: geopolitical factors and new realities in the world, the internal security environment, a disposition to contribute to international peacekeeping and peace-enforcement activities, and the country's traditional relationships.

Two tendencies can be identified in world-wide perspective: the reduction of global threats and an increase in local instability. The end of the Cold War reduced the threat of global conflict. Bulgaria is no longer a satellite of a great power and has freedom to develop its own approach to security, based on its own interests and objectives. At the same time, however, the security guarantee of 'the big brother' has disappeared. Thus Bulgaria needs its 'new model' security provision as soon as possible. Still, the threat of direct military aggression is reduced significantly¹⁴. This reflects many changes in the European security environment: conclusion of the Treaty on Conventional Forces in Europe; development of some co-operative approaches to security; and advances in the process of European political co-operation. It cannot be concluded, however, that a system for collective security on the continent is already built and is functioning.

Turning to 'local instability', unfortunately south-eastern Europe is a zone of new risks, generated by several factors. In the first place, the disintegration of former Yugoslavia intensified many ethnic and religious contradictions. Successful containment of some has been followed by the emergence of others. There is stability

¹⁴ *Concept of National Security of the Republic of Bulgaria*, adopted by the National Assembly (16 April 1998).

in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but the Kosovo problem intensified in 1998/99. Kosovo is situated at less than 300 km from the Bulgarian frontier, targets in Serbia itself are even closer, so this most recent of the 'wars of the Yugoslav succession' impinged directly on the Bulgarian security environment. In the second place, long-standing differences persist about the Macedonian 'language' and the 'Macedonian nation'. Relations between Bulgaria and Macedonia improved in 1998/99 – some political and economic agreements were signed – but there is a latent tension here. There is a tension also between Bulgaria and (rump) Yugoslavia over the rights of Bulgarian minorities in border areas. More generally, Bulgaria has observed the international trade financial embargo against former Yugoslavia. This has affected the Bulgarian security environment imposing significant economic losses because of interrupted contacts with Western Europe and by creating conditions favourable for organised crime and corruption in Bulgaria.

The most significant risks for internal security originate in economic distress, poor living standards, the high level of criminality (all types of crime – against the person and personal property, corruption, drug traffic), a lack of trust in the authorities, an unstable bank system and inadequate bank control. There is a deep crisis in the manufacturing and financial sectors, little domestic purchasing power, and considerable external and internal government debt. However, the economic outlook improved in 1998/99: the establishment of a currency board restrained inflation, citizens began to trust the lev. The image of the country for foreign investors improved.

Bulgaria declared several times its desire to take part in international activities, such as peacekeeping, peace enforcement, and humanitarian aid; and, despite the lack of resources and military potential, the country has taken part in several activities under the auspices of the UN and OSCE. Support for the implementation of the Dayton agreement – taking part in SFOR with an engineer platoon attached to the Netherlands contingent – is one example. Also Bulgaria was one of the first countries to sign the PfP agreement, and now the country is very active in the programme.

4. Official formulations

How are objectives formulated in legislative documents and the articles, speeches and statements of Bulgarian politicians? The rights, dignity and security of individuals are elevated as uppermost principles in the Bulgarian Constitution.¹⁵ These principles can be regarded as 'aspirations' in terms of the structure depicted in Fig.1 above. As a main objective in the national security policy of Bulgaria the current Military Doctrine offers the following: 'to protect and to stabilise peace in a situation of internal stability and international safety and to ensure favourable conditions for the progressive development of the Nation'. This objective is completely acceptable, but it is formulated too broadly and can hardly find its place in a functional interests-

¹⁵ *Constitution of the Republic of Bulgaria*, adopted by a Grand National Assembly (12 July 1991).

objectives hierarchy. However it can be built into other objectives which are directly connected with interests and lower-level goals.

A broad list of objectives oriented towards the interests of Bulgarian citizens, of civil society, and of the state is presented in the country's National Security Concept. According to this document, Bulgarian citizens' interests are in 'assuredly guaranteed constitutional rights and freedoms, personal safety, enhancement of quality and level of life, and of social and health insurance'. Interests of civil society are in 'endorsement of democracy, civilian control over institutions', freedom of association, in the rights of religious, ethnic and minority groups and in the preservation of national intellectual and cultural values and traditions'. The state's interests require safeguarding the Constitution, protection of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country, achievement of political and financial stability and of economic and social development, plus strict respect to the legal order, equal rights and mutually beneficial international relations'.¹⁶

These items can be located at different hierarchy levels. Most of them must count as 'aspirations', with the following exceptions: enhancement of quality and level of life, and of social and health insurance, which might be designated current policy objectives, related with the aspiration to promote well-being of the citizens. The same pattern can be applied to items like 'preservation of national intellectual and cultural values and traditions'. They can be positioned in the third level, related to the second-level commitment to 'consolidation of national identity'.

Bulgaria is a small country with low economic and military potential. The country is not able to ensure its security by itself. Accordingly it is written in the Military Doctrine of the country that 'military co-operation is a component of foreign policy activities and the state's military policy...to support a stable international military-political atmosphere and...the trend to peaceful and civilised interaction between nations'.

The key current policy objective here is Euro-Atlantic integration. In a recent statement, Foreign Minister Nadezda Mihailova said that 'The will to join the North Atlantic Alliance at an early date, stated by all Bulgarian institutions – the President, the Government and the Parliament – is largely supported by public opinion'. Later Mrs Mihailova added that this is an expression of a categorical and sovereign choice and not the result of the politics of the day.

The *President* has spoken forcefully on this point. In his statement to the North Atlantic Council on 29 January 1997 he listed the premises for the firm Bulgarian desire for NATO membership: 'First, Bulgaria's belonging to the same value system and our readiness to contribute to the general security and share the risks of defending and protecting these same general values; second, the conviction that a changing NATO will be the cornerstone of Euro-Atlantic security in the twenty-first Century; third, our desire for equal participation in the process of reform and decision-making in the area of Trans-Atlantic security especially where our region is concerned'. He confirmed in his address before the Madrid Summit (9 July 1997) that Bulgaria 'shares the Atlantic values and we are determined to participate in their

¹⁶ *Concept of National Security of the Republic of Bulgaria*, adopted by the National Assembly (16 April 1998).

development and defence'. Later he declared: 'Our aspiration to be a part of the Euro-Atlantic family of nations is not prompted by temporary considerations. It is a strategic priority'.

The *Parliament* has endorsed the objective unequivocally. The heads of all political parties represented in the Parliament support integration in Euro-Atlantic structures. In April 1998 the Parliament adopted a new Concept for national security, developed by the Government. As a first paragraph of the section on priorities and factors affecting national security in this text is listed the Bulgarian desire for full membership in NATO and the EU, in keeping with and guaranteeing national interests.

The decision to declare this desire was taken by the *Government* (of Stefan Sofianski) in February 1997.¹⁷ It is mentioned in the text of this decision that NATO membership corresponds to the strategic national interests of Bulgaria. Also the decision assigned the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Defence the task to develop a National Programme to prepare for accession. This Programme was developed and adopted by the Government on 17 March 1997.¹⁸ It specifies the measures which the government and other institutions should implement in order to achieve the aim. They are enumerated here.

- Political dialogue and consultation and other diplomatic activities: development of a foreign policy agenda to achieve full membership, dialogue and consultation with NATO members and with the Alliance, contribution to the discussion on PfP, co-operation with other applicant countries, improvement of good-neighbourly relations.
- Political preparation for membership and implementation of NATO standards: development of the national security strategy and military doctrine, review of national legislation and its harmonisation with the legislation of current NATO member states, review of international treaties and agreements, improvement of civilian and democratic control over the armed forces, establishment of crisis management arrangements, personnel training to manage co-operation activities.
- Measures to improve interoperability with the NATO forces: participation in PfP, update of the Partnership Programme, expanding Bulgaria's forces and assets available for PfP activities and for participation in multinational operations under NATO command, participation in Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTfFs), review of the concept for the reform of the Bulgarian Armed forces.
- Economic aspects of integration: adaptation of defence R&D, defence industry and procurement to standards and practices in NATO member states, exploitation of industrial and armament co-

¹⁷ Decision No 192 of the Bulgarian Council of Ministers (17 February 1997).

¹⁸ *National program on the preparation for Bulgaria's accession to the North Atlantic Alliance.*

operation with NATO member states, modernise infrastructure, communication and information systems.

- Information activities: establishment of a NATO information centre, publication of a White Book on NATO-Bulgaria relations, publication of NATO documents, specialised education programme for military officers on NATO-related issues.

These points can be interpreted as tasks which should be implemented in order to achieve the aim of NATO integration. The successor government of the United Democratic Forces coalition (UDF) endorsed them in its programme 'Bulgaria 2001'. On this basis Foreign Minister Nadezda Mihailova was able to remind the 1997 Atlantic Treaty Association General Assembly¹⁹ that 'in Madrid Bulgaria categorically reaffirmed that an early accession to the North Atlantic Alliance remains its immediate national interest and strategic priority and outlined a clear-cut national strategy for its future efforts for joining NATO'. A few months later, at a Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council meeting in Brussels, the Minister re-emphasised that Bulgaria will pursue its concerted efforts towards the strategic aim of early membership in the Alliance.²⁰

In this spirit the UDF government continued implementation of the National Programme on the preparation for accession to NATO. Also it has paid attention to some different tasks, connected with the same aim. One of these is participation in peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance operations. In its national strategy for the preparation of the Republic of Bulgaria for membership of the European Union there is a part covering common foreign and security policy. It is declared here that '...The adaptation of national procedures in the processes of planning and implementation of such operations [peacekeeping operations, humanitarian aid operations and so on] to those of EU will continue'. More practically, as noted earlier, Bulgaria has a unit in the Stabilisation (SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina which shows that the state not only declares but also is really ready and is really able to join international operations. The government also stood ready in 1997 to send military units to join the forces engaged in the Italian-led 'Alba' Operation in Albania.²¹

As implied by the reference in the preceding paragraph, another aim, which is broadly approved, is integration to European Union. The cited document says that Bulgaria's membership of the EU is a strategic aim backed by a consensus among the main political parties. Participation will provide a number of benefits from a political, economic and social point of view, and also from the point of view of the security of the state and its citizens. From the political point of view, membership 'contributes towards the development of civil society and the strengthening of democratic institutions as well as the security of the state and its citizens'. Benefits for the country from economic point of view are connected with 'participation in the single European market and the free movement of goods, services, people and capital, access

¹⁹ Sofia, 6 October 1997.

²⁰ 17 December 1997.

²¹ Lecture of Mrs Nadezda Mihaylova, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, before the Atlantic Club in Bulgaria (17 July 1997).

to structural funds and the flow of investments and new technology'. From the social point of view membership in EU 'will create new opportunities for Bulgaria to come closer to European standards in conditions of work and safety, health, education and social insurance'.

The government has an action plan aimed at integration in the EU. Activities are in the following areas: adaptation of state structures, establishment of a functioning market economy (including macro-economic stabilisation, land reform, reform in the banking sector, reform in the tax system, financial control), adaptation of legislation to European standards, adaptation of the internal market, development of common policies (in agriculture, transport, energy, telecommunication and so on). The programme envisages 'preparation' by existing state action structures and non-governmental agencies as well as by especially established inter-institutional bodies. Major roles are assigned to state institutions like the Council of Ministers, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other ministries and authorities, institutions of local government, and diplomatic representatives in the member states of the EU and the associated countries. The government will also engage organisations which represent different social groups like trade unions, employers' organisations, as well as NGOs. Among inter-institutional bodies to be involved are: a Council for European Integration, Inter-institutional Committee for European Integration, plus working groups covering different areas, in which experts of different ministries and institutions will take part.

Regional co-operation is an important objective also. The government wishes to pursue an active and constructive policy in relations with the countries of Southeast Europe. Bulgaria will continue to be a factor for stability in the Balkans. The country has no territorial claims on its neighbours and does not admit territorial claims on itself.

Interest in deeper regional integration is expressed not only in documents and declarations but also in action. In 1997/98 several initiatives were taken. Sofia hosted a meeting of defence ministers from south-eastern European PfP states and NATO member states Greece, Italy, Turkey, and the US. Bulgaria and other countries in the region initiated – in the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC) – a process of wider consultation and security co-operation in the Balkans and the Black Sea region. So far as the country's near neighbours are concerned President Petar Stoyanov has conferred with the Presidents of Romania and Turkey in Varna. Also Bulgaria has hosted a tripartite meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, Greece and Romania. Hence regional co-operation can be observed as an aim, supporting the goal of enhancing general non-military co-operation. In this connection Bulgaria has said it does not aspire to security through a military-political balance in the Balkans and therefore is against Balkan military or political alliances.

While seeking integration in the world community, the political leaders nevertheless want to preserve the country's political independence. It is mentioned in the National Security Concept that 'the main condition for implementation of national interests is protection of possibilities for Bulgaria to solve alone its internal political, economic and social problems, as well as to arrange its relationships with other states and communities independently of the intentions, position and interests of third countries'. Objectives for co-operation and integration and for independence are not

contradictory, as might be supposed, because (a) Bulgaria pursues integration precisely to protect its national interests and under conditions of equal rights and mutual benefits; and (b) the main principle in the communities in which Bulgaria desires to participate is that they are communities of sovereign nations where decisions are taken by consensus.²²

Directly related to preserving independence is regard for national identity. It is mentioned in the National Security Concept that national identity is sustained by propagation of Bulgarian morality, intellectual values and cultural inheritance. The importance of these aspirations stems from the fact that Bulgaria can hardly increase its prestige through rapid economic growth and high defence power. It can be honoured, however, for its cultural heritage, traditions and values. It is important also that national identity is respected in the documents safeguarding the rights and freedoms of ethnic and religious communities.

Finally, an objective, related with all others and of particular importance, is establishment of a market economy and promotion of economic growth. There is a link between fast market reform and assured security. First, a healthy economy is a condition for reduction of the influence of internal risk factors. Second, if a trend towards NATO integration exists, it will increase the willingness of foreign enterprises to invest in Bulgaria. Increased foreign direct investment will strongly boost business activity and economic development.

To summarise this discussion, the elements in the foregoing analysis can be grouped under the headings distinguished in Fig.1 earlier in this section.

- First level *national interests*: national survival as a state, economic vitality and prosperity, preservation of society's core values (democracy, market economy, style of life and so on).
- Second level *aspirations*: guarantee the constitutional rights and freedoms, personal safety, to provide for well-being of the citizens, to protect style of life of the citizens, endorsement of democracy, approval of national identity, constitution protection, protection of sovereignty, protection of territorial integrity of the country, achievement of financial stability and economic development, social development, respect to legal order, equality of rights and mutually beneficial international relations, state's political independence.
- Third level *objectives of current policy*: creating conditions to avoid conflicts, deterring and otherwise preventing aggression, defeating aggression when occur, enhancement of quality and level of life, social and health insurance, civilian control over institutions, freedom for association, rights of religious, ethnic and minority groups, preservation of national intellectual and cultural values, preservation of national intellectual and cultural

²² *Military Doctrine of Republic of Bulgaria, Concept of National Security of Republic of Bulgaria.*

- traditions, development of market economy, political, military and economic integration into the world community.
- Fourth level, *goals*: maintaining adequate defence capability, promote security co-operation and integration, promote non-military co-operation.
 - Fifth level, *aims*: promote co-operative security measures, promote integration in NATO, regional co-operation, bilateral co-operation.

This hierarchy is derived mostly from adopted legislative documents, articles, speeches and statements by Bulgarian politicians. It can be developed further by creating new levels, or by adding other objects into existing levels. It also must be underlined that different levels are not related with the importance of objects but with their nature.

5. Analysts' opinions

Bulgarian observers and analysts construe Bulgarian national interests, aspirations and objectives similarly. A survey of recent literature reveals a general coincidence of views. Differences typically reflect political orientation and are mostly over NATO membership or non-membership. The dominant theme is the importance of integration at all levels (world-wide, European, regional), and in all aspects (political, economic, military). Also it is especially underlined that security policy should be developed on the basis of the joint, mutual and congruent interests of Bulgaria's traditional and potential partners.²³

According to the respected analyst Valery Ratchev, these interests are: stability in international relations in the security sphere via attention to crisis prevention and conflict resolution; establishment of a 'new European order' based on specific norms and approaches in the sphere of minorities, ethnic, border and humanitarian problems; regulation of the two-way economic and financial relationship during the process of adaptation and integration of Bulgaria to EU with the emphasis on developing reciprocal and mutually beneficial relations; arresting the technological, scientific, informational, social and defence decline of Bulgaria in comparison with EU countries; and creating the circumstances for consolidation of a democratic political system and market-oriented economy of Bulgaria.

Most analysts think that the high priority objectives for the country are integration in NATO and WEU. As far back as in 1995 former Chairman of the Assembly's National Security Committee, Nikolay Slatinsky, and Marina Caparini wrote that 'security guarantees are sought primarily by campaigning for eventual

²³ Valery Ratchev, 'Military-political aspects of foreign policy in post-conflict period in Balkans', in *Security on the Balkans through transparency of national planning and budgeting* (Sofia: University publishing house 'Stopanstvo', 1996), p.44 (in Bulgarian).

NATO and WEU membership. NATO membership is a clear priority.²⁴ Some nuances can be found in the comparative priority accorded to EU integration and NATO integration. The common view, however, is that these objectives are not contradictory. Ratchev, for example, says integration to the European political, economic and defence structures is a strategic objective, while extension of co-operation with NATO is a tactical one.²⁵

Andrey Ivanov conducted a survey among the Bulgarian military and political elite on their attitude to membership of NATO in 1997.²⁶ According to this survey 59.5 per cent of respondents believed that membership would promote domestic political stability, 67.9 per cent thought it would guarantee the territorial integrity of the country, 71.6 per cent that it would make political reforms irreversible. The same proportion thought that it would make the country's resources more capable of resisting potential national security threats. There is not, however, considerable confidence that integration might positively affect political polarisation in the country.

²⁴ Nikolay Slatinsky, Marina Caparini, 'Bulgarian security and prospects for reform', *NATO review* (No 2; vol. 43, 1995).

²⁵ Valery Ratchev, *op.cit.*, p.48-49.

²⁶ Andrey Ivanov, *Membership in NATO: the 'pros' and 'cons': Results of an Expert Survey among the Bulgarian Military and Political Elite* (1997).

IV. RISK ASSESSMENT AND BULGARIAN SECURITY POLICY FORMULATION

1. Threats as a factor of the security environment

In the previous section a system of interests, aspirations, objectives of current policy, goals and aims was considered. All these objects have a positive nuance: they reflect tendencies and desires of the state and its citizens. This section analyses those factors which obstruct the achievement of desires, and in this sense can be treated as carrying a negative nuance.

Several different terms – like risks, threats, and challenges – are used in the political practice. Very often words with different meanings are used as synonyms, and in the opposite case the same term is used with different meanings. Here we try to differentiate the terms.

For example, the term risk is used in several different senses. Most often people speak of business risk, social risk, economic risk, safety risk, investment risk, military risk, political risk and so on. Usually risk is connected with uncertainty. For instance, one writer defines risk as '...an uncertain situation, in which a number of possible outcomes might occur, one or more of which is undesirable'.²⁷ Insurance risk is connected with possible losses of property. In this field, risk is defined as 'uncertainty concerning the occurrence of a loss'.²⁸

In management, risk is considered in accordance with some probabilistic characteristics of parameters, used for the evaluation of decision alternatives; for example, variation of expected profit, standard deviation of net income for year X and so on. In other words, risk is measured not by the size of the possible negative effect, but by the estimation of its possible variation. This means that if it is known with certainty that something negative will happen (suppose there will be a loss of US\$ 500,000 on an investment), the risk will be zero, because the parameter 'loss' in this case is a determined variable.

In the political arena risk is often used as a synonym of threat or latent threat. Recently, in harmony with the global trend towards threat reduction, it is a custom to use 'risk' instead of 'threat'. However in this study risk denotes a threat that has not occurred yet but might occur with a given probability.

Another term in regular use is challenge. In political discourse challenge means a threat with low value and probability, or a threat that politicians have reasons for not calling a threat. The term is also used in the sense that political decision-makers are provoked to undertake some contra-activities.

Threats can be considered from different points of view. Two of them are of interest here: a threat can be considered as a factor or force which obstructs the achievement of security policy objectives, or as a probabilistic event that could cause

²⁷ Miley W. Merkhofer, *Decision science and social risk management: a comparative evaluation of cost-benefit analysis, decision analysis, and other formal decision-aiding approaches* (D. Reidel Publishing Company, 1987), p.2.

²⁸ George Rejda, *Principles of risk management and insurance* (Harper Collins Publishers, 1992), p.5.

negative consequences. In the first case threats are considered in the following way. The process of an objective's achievement may come up against factors that actively oppose or prevent it. For example, state 'A' generates military potential directed against state 'B' by re-locating military units not far from the border, by developing tactical plans for invasion or by establishing coalitions against 'B'. Under these circumstances state 'A' threatens 'B'. The threat is directed against the interest of 'B' for national survival as a state as well as against concrete objectives – the personal safety of citizens, sovereignty and territorial integrity. In this situation the subject that threatens carries out active efforts and spends resources in order to create and to keep up the threat. (Here we are not interested in the purpose of 'A' in creating the threat. On the other hand the threatened state is forced to spend resources to reduce or eliminate the threat.)

Another example considers one country with two big groups of population that profess two different religions. There is tension between these groups, based mainly on religious differences. Under some circumstances this tension may initiate serious conflicts. The threat in this situation is not a result of any purposive activities. Nevertheless this threat is an obstacle for the country's interests in preservation of the society's core values and in concrete objectives – protection of religious groups' rights, personal safety of citizens and legal order. This kind of threat may frustrate or prevent the achievement of some objectives. Overcoming these threats also requires effort and resources.

Thus threats are directly connected with one or more country's interests as well as with one or more security objectives or tasks. A fact can be accepted as a threat only in regard to existing interests and objectives. However, it is important to add that politicians and decision-makers base their decisions not on objective information, but on their perceptions. There are no statistically sure data to objectively evaluate the value of threats. That is why decision-makers have to rely on their beliefs, feelings, hopes and fears. In the next section we try to evaluate the results of a survey partly directed at assessing the value of existing threats in Bulgaria's security environment.

Interdependence between threats and interests is influenced by a number of moderating factors. These are conditions that reduce the probability or violence of real impact of threats onto interests and objectives. Without entering into details, as moderating factors against external threats can be mentioned the military potential of a country, its participation in an international system for joint security, bilateral or multilateral treaties for military support, the economic interests of potential aggressors or interests of other countries in the country under question, and so on. Usually, such factors do not affect threats and their sources. They serve only as regulators of the influence of threats on the system of interests and objectives.

Threats can also be considered as events which might occur and whose occurrence might lead to negative effects in regard to security objectives. From this point of view threats can be evaluated in two aspects: their probability and the character and size of the negative effect. It is obvious, that these two factors can be evaluated only subjectively. To evaluate the probability one can use a quantitative measuring scale (valuing subjectively). At the same time the negative effect of an event is not always quantifiable. If the potential negative effect is expressed in loss of life, property or financial losses, it can be measured by the number of victims, value

of lost property, value of financial losses. There are, however, negative effects which cannot be measured – for example the reduction of a citizen's feeling of personal security, the reduction of trust in Bulgaria as a country with stable democracy, and so on. Under such circumstances the only possibility for estimation is to rank possible threatening events by the subjectively evaluated size of the negative effects of their occurrence.

A parallel evaluation of the probability and the negative effect provides the opportunity to estimate the *intensity* of a threat. Events with high probability and high negative effect cause threats with high intensity. Conversely, events with low probability and low negative effect cause threats with low intensity. It is more difficult to evaluate events with low probability and high negative effect and events with high probability and low negative effect. Usually, however, the intensity of a threat can be estimated as a product of the probability and the expected negative effect (damage) of the threatening event.

If we admit that the negative effect can be measured, threats could then be represented as depicted in Fig. 2.

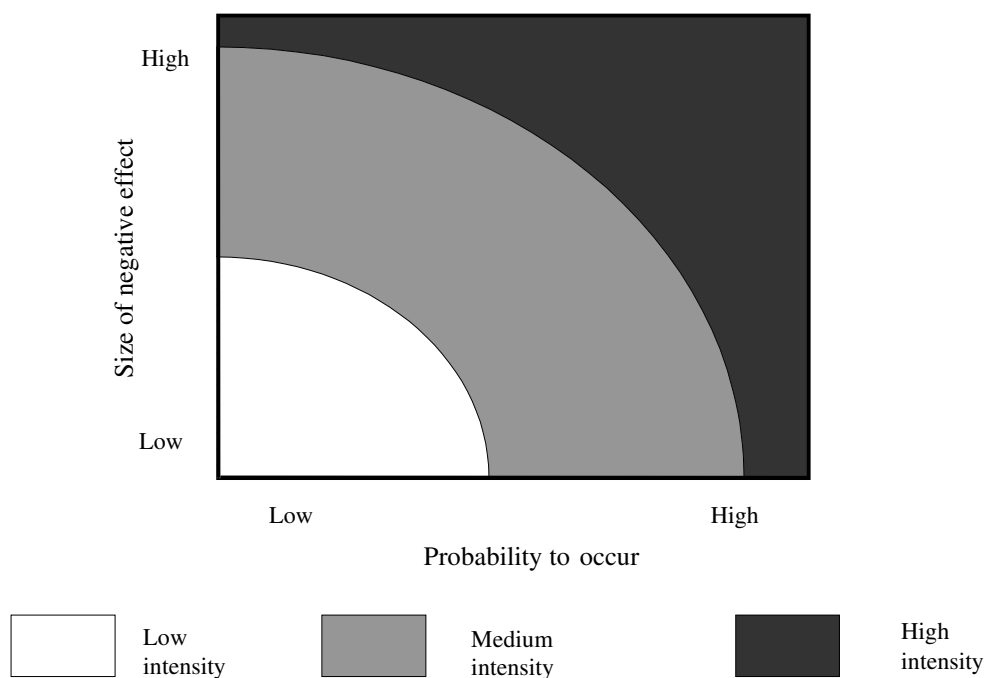


Fig. 2. Estimation of threat intensity

If a cardinal scale for evaluation of both the negative effect and the probability is chosen, some areas with approximately equal value can be identified. The choice of vertical and horizontal scales must be made carefully because they will represent one's attitude to the comparative weight of the two factors.

From the second point of view threats are also estimated in terms of their connection with interests and objectives. Expected events are considered as

threatening or not depending on whether they can influence security objectives' achievement or not. The character and size of the negative effect are evaluated depending on security objectives as well.

At the same time threats also influence objectives. Emerging, disappearing and changing threats may lead to changes in the structure of objectives. Emerging centres of tension not far from North Bulgaria's border after the dissolution of former Yugoslavia, for example, forced Bulgaria to intensify its efforts in the field of regional security policy. Imposing the embargo created additional tasks such as closer surveillance of the country's western border. The elimination of the global contradiction East-West affected the weight of many objectives of both the former socialist and the Western states.

Threats are not mutually independent. A threat can generate another threat or threats. Two threats can reinforce each other, their influence on the security environment can have a cumulative effect. Thus the severe economic crisis at the beginning of 1997 in Bulgaria led to very serious social tension and domestic unrest. During the mass street demonstrations the police applied force, there were lots of wounded people. The economic crisis was one of the reasons for the political crisis and finally for the pre-term parliamentary elections. Threats to a state's security can arise from developments in other states. For example huge quantities of weapons in Albanian citizens' hands became the reason for the intensification of the illegal arms trade (pistols, even machine guns) in south-western Bulgaria. Tensions between Turkey and Greece are accepted as a real threat to Bulgaria's security.

2. Categorisation and sources of threats

Threats are extremely different in nature. It is difficult to formulate a precise categorisation. Here we can simply point out some terms in which threats can be considered. Depending on whether their existence is a fact or not, they can be real or potential. Some degrees or levels also can be identified. If we consider military threats, for example, the following cases could be identified:

- The potential adversary is pursuing (or may pursue) policies that conflict with national interests and objectives;
- The potential adversary possesses or (may acquire) the military means to advance his policies;
- The potential adversary's actions could threaten national interests and objectives.²⁹

It is hard to identify to what extent a particular threat is real (i.e. to measure the probability of the threatening event to occur). Such identification very often causes controversy among policy decision-makers.

²⁹ *Uncertainty, but not mystery, in defense planning* (in Focus on the Quadrennial Defense Review, RAND Publications, fall 1997).

Depending on the place of occurrence, threats can be divided into internal and external. Internal threats are usually related to the internal security environment, but it has to be taken into consideration that internal threats are very often initiated or strongly influenced by external factors. Ethnic tension in one country, for example, can be generated or stimulated by a neighbouring country that seeks to increase its influence on the first country through its minority there. Division of threats into internal and external is in some cases conditional. Consider the international drug traffic channel crossing Bulgaria. It represents a threat which is external because of the international nature of the channel. However, the same threat is also internal because narcotics can be distributed in the country, Bulgarians participate in the trade, and there is a flow of dirty money that can be invested in other criminal activities in the country.

From the point of view of the scale of influence, threats can be global, regional, state and local. This classification is also conditional. Because of globalisation threats existing in one region of the world are inevitably accepted as threats in other regions.

Considering their nature, threats can be described as political, social, economic, ecological, and so on. A potentially dangerous event may become a generator for two or more threats different by nature. A military aggression, for instance, can cause breach of territorial integrity, loss of citizens' lives, economic losses, but also ecological disasters and catastrophes, if a chemical or pharmaceutical enterprise or a nuclear plant is damaged during the battle.

Depending on the intensity of an enemy's activities we may distinguish between aggression, compulsion and intimidation. Politicians and political observers are to a great extent unanimous about the list of threats' sources. Discussions are mostly oriented towards the comparative significance of different sources. Political ambitions of different scale are usually number one in the list. Even though the threat of global conflict is extremely reduced there are still centres where threats of war are generated by geopolitical ambitions. Discussions between neighbours on territorial claims, ethnic hatred, minority problems, historical rivalries and competitive arm races also have their importance.

Another group of threat sources is connected with economic interests: access to some strategic raw materials, markets, transport and communication channels. Nowadays dissolution of states, unstable nations, diffusion of nationalistic ideology are also potential sources of threat. For other countries, economic difficulties of the state, the weak structures of civil society, poor executive power and legal authorities are sources mostly of internal but also of external threats.

3. Bulgaria's security environment

The most important factor determining the kind of threats Bulgaria faces is its geopolitical and strategic location. Different interests focus on the country's territory. Bulgaria borders on two NATO member countries which have unsettled disputes. The country is close to centres of serious tension in the territory of the former Yugoslavia

and Albania. Russia has not only once declared that it will not give up its role in the Balkans region.

Bulgaria can hardly rely on its own potential for protection against threats. From a political point of view, the country does not have enough international authority, nor is it a member of NATO and the EU. From an economic point of view, the country has poor production potential, weak financial power, huge internal and external debt. From a military point of view, the army is comparatively large, but has old equipment and lacks resources for maintenance and training (though a bold programme of military reform was embarked upon in early 1999). Bulgaria is, however, an active participant in several international initiatives that have already been mentioned. The aim of this participation is to obtain protection through integration.

There is no actual balance of power in south-eastern Europe. The treaty regarding Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) aimed at balancing capabilities between the Cold War blocs and eliminating the possibility of a sudden attack. However, neighbours' investments in equipment and NATO's 'cascading' policy have caused a regional imbalance.³⁰ Bulgaria nowadays realises that it cannot insure its external security by matching effort. It seeks accommodation with its neighbours based on bilateral and multilateral meetings, treaties, and military agreements.

Irrational security factors play a significant role in shaping perceived threats to Bulgaria's security. These are mostly psychological-emotional factors related to ethnic, religious, socio-cultural and other motives.³¹

In regard to the internal security environment, Bulgaria's population is exposed to significant stress. The initial expectations for a fast transition to democracy and economic development were not realised. Reform in all its aspects has been frozen for a long period. A combination of both external and internal factors created conditions for corruption, *nomenklatura* privatisation and the plundering of society by unsound financial structures. An inefficient judicial system created a feeling of impunity for criminals. There is a psychological atmosphere of frustration and occasional loss of orientation.³²

Some relief came after the election to the Presidency of President Petar Stoianov and the pre-term parliamentary elections in spring 1997. People received a bit of 'fresh hope' for a step-by-step change.

4. Officially recognised threats

The current official view on threats to the country's security is clearly expressed in the *Concept of national security* of the country. Only the representatives of the Socialist Party voted 'against' when the legislature adopted this document. The reason for their

³⁰ Nikolay Slatinsky and Marina Kaparini, op. cit.

³¹ Tilcho Ivanov, *Confidence and security in the Balkans: the role of Transparency in Defense Budgeting: Research report* (Sofia: Institute for Security and International Studies, 1996).

³² Plamen Pantev, *The new national security environment and its impact on the civil-military relations in Bulgaria* (Zurich: Center for Security Studies and Conflict Research, Research Study, 5, 1997).

negative vote was their specific attitude towards NATO integration. Therefore it can be maintained that the text represents the view of all parliamentary political forces regarding threats to the country's security.

The document presents in a very precise manner those sources of threat that are most significant according to the politicians. Considerable differences between the countries in terms of guarantees of national security and membership in international alliances are cited as external sources of threat in the Balkans region.³³ Other differences in terms of political and institutional culture, standard of life and social practice are considered relevant also. Two of the countries in the region – Greece and Turkey – are NATO members, and Greece is also a member of the EU. Turkey has one of the largest and best equipped armies in the world; while the other countries have smaller and less capable forces, there are both quantitative and qualitative imbalances among the Balkan countries.³⁴

The poor economic situation in the country, lack of traditions in the protection of human rights and freedoms, weak structures of civil society, justice and executive authorities are considered as internal sources of threat in the *Concept*. The unfavourable economic conditions in the country, which continued over many years, brought the living standard of Bulgaria's citizens to a very low level. Some social and minority groups were especially badly affected. The level of criminality increased and the nature of crimes changed. Crimes became more brutal. The so-called 'street' criminality increased. Housebreaking hurt almost every family. With the increasing number of acquittals for those offenders actually caught, citizens became more and more afraid for their lives and for the lives of their families.

Companies had not only to overcome the problems connected with the poor economic situation, but they were also exposed to extortion – by both state employees and criminal organisations – and corruption throughout the administration. Society doubted that the executive power and the judiciary were capable of protecting the interests of the citizens and the country. Even during the present rule of the government of Ivan Kostov, which enjoys strong public support (more than 50 per cent, according to some opinion polls), there are few encouraging results from the war against criminality.

Justice is extremely slow. There is not even a single top criminal who has been imprisoned for his real crimes. There is not even a single banker who has been convicted for having intentionally granted irretrievable credits to the amount of millions of dollars. The co-ordination between the executive and the judiciary is not very well organised. The personal animosity between the chief prosecutor Ivan Tatarchev and the Minister of Internal affairs Bogomil Bonev that lasted for months, and expressed itself even in public recriminations, is already the object of derision in society. The police accuse the prosecutor's office because criminals are discharged for lack of evidence. The prosecutor's office accuses the police that they do not act with professionalism as they catch criminals without sufficient strong evidence. The police

³³ Concept of National Security of Republic of Bulgaria.

³⁴ 'Military Doctrine of Republic of Bulgaria', *Bulgarian Military Review* (No. 3-4, 1994). (This text was superseded by a revised one early in 1999.)

say that courts do not process cases fast enough. While all these mutual accusations take place the criminals enjoy virtual immunity.

As untraditional sources of conflicts and tension the official document recognises factors connected with ecology, natural resources, national and international organised crime, drug traffic, contraband, and much else.³⁵ From the point of view of this study, such factors can be acknowledged as sources of threat. However, it would not be possible to use military power in any of these cases (nor would political decision-makers allow this).

In enumerating concrete security threats, global nuclear conflict and direct military aggression against the country are usually put in first place. In regard to global nuclear war the *Concept of National Security* states that the threat has decreased throughout the world.³⁶ The threat of direct military aggression against Bulgaria has also decreased significantly during the last decade. The President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs assert that at the moment Bulgaria does not have direct enemies and there is no immediate threat of invasion in the country. In the 1999 *Military Doctrine* it is also stated that the country is not threatened by immediate military aggression. At the same time, however, this document says that if there is military activity near Bulgaria the army must be ready for action in case the conflict expands.³⁷ There are obvious sources of such threat in the region. Politicians in power, however, think that there are enough restraining factors, which minimise these threats directed against the country's interest in national survival and protection of its citizens' personal security. Integration processes in the region and all over the world, bilateral and multilateral agreements between Bulgaria and its neighbours, the economic interests of other countries in Bulgaria and the country's international image as a stable democracy can be considered as restraining factors.

Ethnic and religious conflicts next to Bulgaria's borders are of significant importance as sources of threat. *Concept of National Security* states: '...Representatives of different religious, ethnic societies and cultures, some of which are in conflict, inhabit South-Eastern Europe. After the formation of new countries different societies and minority groups plead aggressive differentiation and isolation. This has sharply increased regional threats for our national security'.³⁸ The ethnic problem is one of the most dangerous in the region. There are conflicts here that have not been solved for years (for example the Macedonian question). The reasons for the lack of solution lie in the extreme complexity, historic determination and intersection of different interests. The possibility for some almost solved conflicts (for instance Bosnia) to burst out again cannot be eliminated.

Kosovo is the principal preoccupation at the time of writing. This situation impinges directly on Bulgaria. Military operations are being conducted close to the country's borders (and stray missiles have landed on Bulgarian soil). Other

³⁵ Military Doctrine of the Republic of Bulgaria, op. cit.

³⁶ Concept of National Security of the Republic of Bulgaria, op. cit.

³⁷ See Lia Braneva, 'Military Doctrine: Bulgaria has no enemies', *SEGA (Now) Newspaper* (Nr 14, 1998) (in Bulgarian) and the text itself as published in March/April 1999.

³⁸ Concept of National Security of the Republic of Bulgaria, op.cit. p.3.

repercussions are possible, since Bulgarian faculties are being used for some activities. Trade disruption is already taking its toll. Bulgaria's transport connection to Europe goes through Serbia. As during the previous sanctions, cancelled in 1995, Bulgaria is cut off from European markets. If the situation persists, the damage to Bulgaria's economic recovery is incalculable.³⁹

Observers also connect the Kosovo crisis with the situation in Bosnia and Montenegro. A Kosovo secession could initiate separatist moves in Montenegro as well (and, perhaps, fuel Albanian ambitions). It has already displaced hundreds of thousands of people, calling into question the earlier Bulgarian assessment that there is no threat of refugees' waves on the territory of the country at the moment.⁴⁰ As for Bosnia, tension between Christians and Moslems still conceals danger. The Dayton Peace Agreement has not been completely applied yet. Bulgaria wants a prolongation of the mandate of international forces there. 'We assess peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a fragile status quo and we support the future prolongation of the international military presence – either as SFOR or as post-SFOR NATO-led forces'.⁴¹

Religious and ethnic conflicts near Bulgaria's borders and the threats connected with them influence the country's interests in national survival as a state and in economic vitality as well as objectives like guaranteeing constitutional rights and freedoms, personal safety and citizens' welfare.

Internal threats, to which politicians in power pay very serious attention, are organised crime, illegal drugs traffic, illegal arms trade and terrorism. The *Concept of National Security* states that: 'The real threat for the fragile democracies in Eastern and Central Europe as well as for the economic development of the whole continent are not the enemy's armies, but illegal and 'semi-legal' organisations of criminals that are former collaborators of the security services and the political police and who have specialised in organised violence, goods contraband, people, drug and arms traffic.'⁴²

There is a well-organised network of organised crime in Bulgaria. Some people say that former collaborators of the security services, with the support of secret funds left by the former Communist party and resources accumulated by illegal trade during the embargo against Yugoslavia, have created most of the existing crime structures. They usually conceal their criminal activities behind the screen of security and insurance companies.

High levels of criminality threaten personal security, citizens' well-being and respect for law and orders. Official police statistics cover only a small part of criminality. According to a National Representative Survey, the criminal acts in the country in 1997 were almost six million. Police statistics, however, record only 240,000 for the same period of time.⁴³ Apparently, only 5 per cent of Bulgarians

³⁹ Anatoly Verbin, 'Interview - Yugo sanctions dangerous - Bulgarian PM' *Bulgarian index* (14 May 1998).

⁴⁰ *Declaration of the Consultative Council of National Security to the President of Bulgaria* (3 June 1998).

⁴¹ *Statement by Mrs Nadezhda Mihailova, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria at EAPC meeting of Foreign Ministers, Brussels* (December, 1997).

⁴² *Concept of National Security of Republic of Bulgaria*.

⁴³ Data from a study sponsored by the Open Society Foundation, Burgas Free University and The Agency for Marketing Analysis MAP.

report crimes against them to the police. The rest do not believe the authorities will act.⁴⁴ The Survey points out mass pauperisation, property status polarisation and the natural human wish to become rich as the source of growth of criminality.

5. Experts' and observers' opinions on threats

It is widely accepted among experts that threats' sources have changed radically. Pure military threats do not dominate any more, except in some regions. They have been replaced by new threats. Niels Helveg Petersen, Foreign Minister of Denmark and Chairman-in-Office of the OSCE in 1997 thinks, for example, that the main sources of threat nowadays are '... historically based mistrust and friction between ethnic, religious, or national groupings, aggressive nationalism, social disruption and uncertainty in the light of fundamental economic reforms, illegal migration, drug traffic and organised crime and environmental and ecological threats evolving from years of exploitation of natural resources and uncontrolled industrialisation'.⁴⁵

It must be pointed out that Mr Petersen mentions some threats to which Bulgarian politicians do not pay special attention. These are environmental and ecological threats, for example. Both in and around Bulgaria there are several actual and potential sources of environmental pollution. These should be taken into consideration. Number one is the nuclear plant near Kozlodui. This plant is considered potentially dangerous. It must be said, however, that several international expert commissions have claimed that old nuclear power units can be relatively secure. Even some potentially dangerous tests were conducted in order to analyse the solidity of their structures. Thus an incident at Kozlodui can be considered a threatening event with extremely low probability but with very serious potential consequences.

Similarly some plants in Romania permanently pollute the air in the regions of Rousse and Silistra; and there are several sources of air, water and soil pollution on the territory of Bulgaria itself. There are few resources for building and operating purification installations. However, the owners of some newly privatised enterprises accepted the obligation to implement serious ecological programmes. There are also lots of discussions on environmental security in the Bourgas area in regard to the project for a new oil pipeline to Western Europe through the territory of Bulgaria.

In most cases the country's own experts share the views of politicians in power about the nature and sources of threats to national security. Thus Plamen Pantev identifies in one of his essays six trends in the international security environment.⁴⁶ Global nuclear deterrence and related threats in that field persist. In this respect the author notes that 'nuclear proliferation has found no final and solid international regulation yet'.⁴⁷ In regard to the threat of regional conflicts Pantev maintains that

⁴⁴ '5,878,000 are criminal acts for 1 year', *Kontinent Newspaper* (14 May 1998) (in Bulgarian).

⁴⁵ Niels Helveg Petersen, 'Towards a European security model for the 21st century', *NATO Review* (No 6, 1997 Vol. 45).

⁴⁶ Plamen Pantev, op. cit.

⁴⁷ Idem.

they have rapidly intensified after the end of the Cold War. His opinion on the situation in the Balkans is that regional conflicts here interact very dangerously with broader European and world security conditions. He pays special attention to the former Yugoslavia. The writer sees Greek-Turkish tensions as a very serious military threat. He also notes the existence of the so-called 'Cyprus syndrome' in Bulgarian thinking – fear of an eventual annexation by Turkey of Bulgarian territories inhabited by the Turkish minority. Whether this scenario is realistic or not the presence of such a thought in the minds of ordinary Bulgarians reduces their feeling of security.

Another relevant trend is that some people and some states become poorer and poorer while others get richer and richer. This leads to a deeper differentiation between people as well as between states, and hence to increasing tensions between them.

Two other authors – Nikolay Slatinski and Marina Caparini – think that external sources of threat for national security are primarily the a result of Bulgaria's position regarding the 'traditionally volatile Balkans region, which is marked by long-standing disputes and bitter rivalries'.⁴⁸ Besides a potential extension of the Yugoslavian conflicts, they point out the Greek-Turkish disputes and arms race as well as the tension arising from Bulgaria's official recognition of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as potential threats. The authors refer to a complex of economic factors, polarisation between political forces and weak government as sources of internal threat. According to them economic difficulties are basically a result of the interruption of Bulgaria's traditional connections after the Cold War, of the strict observance of UN sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, of the slow privatisation process as well as of the limited foreign investments. In regard to the political aspect of the problem, the authors mention polarisation between political forces that often turns to confrontation.⁴⁹

Since the beginning of 1997, however, there have been some indications that on some points the political forces have reached consensus. The proposition of weak government can be accepted only for some governmental institutions. The government of Ivan Kostov as a whole is stable and enjoys considerable parliamentary and popular support.

⁴⁸ Nikolay Slatinsky, Marina Caparini, op. cit.

⁴⁹ This article was published in 1995.

V. CRITERIA FOR CHOICE IN BULGARIAN SECURITY POLICY-MAKING

1. Experts' opinion survey

It is not self-evident what are, and what should be, the criteria for security policy decision-making in Bulgaria. However, the thesis here is that they should reflect national interests, aspirations, objectives of current policy, goals and aims on the one hand and threats to national security on the other. Having examined potential criteria from these two perspectives, the task is now to consider the relative weight to be assigned to them. How can we access their comparative importance (for interests, aspirations, objectives, goals and aims), and intensity (for threats)?

To answer this question, it was decided to conduct a survey of opinion among experts involved in security and defence of the country. The methodology of this survey was based on a procedure proposed by Thomas Saaty and Kevin Kearns.⁵⁰ This procedure combines 'hierarchical decomposition' of objects and subsequent ranking to deal with multi-criteria planning problems. By pairwise comparison between objects, experts generate a set of priorities which expresses the relative importance of the target variables.

Participants in the survey were asked to express their views in this way. We cannot expect any expert, in spite of his experience and qualification, to arrange target variables directly on a specific scale. It is impossible to measure most of the variables. Therefore results will be much more reliable if experts answer questions like: What is the contribution of object A in comparison to object B to national interests? Do A and B contribute equally; A slightly or considerably more than B; or B more than A? After generalisation of all participants' opinions by a mathematical procedure, all objects can be positioned on a scale.

It has been shown that threats to national security can be evaluated by two parameters – the probability of threatening events to occur, and the scale of the negative effect, if events happen. In this survey experts were asked to give their opinion on these parameters for threats to Bulgarian security existing at the beginning of 1999. A pairwise comparison was sought here also. As a result analysed threats were positioned in a two-dimensional scale. We must underline here that our purpose was not to *calculate* probabilities of threatening events to occur. Nor is it possible to use this methodology to *calculate* scale of negative effect in any absolute units of measurement (levs, expected number of lost lives and so on). Our experts' rankings reflect both probabilities and scales of negative effects – that is, intensity.

In pairwise comparison the experts used a 9-point scale. On this 1 means that compared objects rank equally, and 9 that one object heavily outweighs another. It was especially underlined that participants were not obliged to follow strictly the laws of formal logic. If, for example, an expert believes that an object A is more significant than object B and object B is more significant than object C, he is not

⁵⁰ Thomas Saaty and Kevin Kearns, *Analytical Planning: the Organization of Systems* (Pergamon Press, 1985).

obliged necessarily to believe that object A is more significant than object C. The purpose of this specification is to elicit experts' intuitively formed positions, without regard to their consistency. The mathematical procedure used in this survey allows for this. Indeed, it is possible to measure quantitatively the level of consistency; and if this does not exceed admissible limits, results can be accepted. Otherwise experts must re-examine their opinions, taking into account results from the first iteration. Afterwards the procedure repeats again.

Harmony between experts was evaluated by calculation of the standard deviation of their individual scores for every single pair of objects. This approach allows evaluation of the convergence of individual opinions, as well as the identification of areas where consensus exists or does not exist.

The choice of experts to take part in the survey was based on a number of considerations. The most important were: to be highly qualified, to have experience in security matters and not to be politically engaged.

2. National interests, aspirations, goals and aims

After the collection and processing of experts' individual opinions the consistency of the results was analysed. Summarised information on this test is given in Table 1 of the Appendix. As it can be seen, the consistency index varies between 1.08 and 3.07 per cent. Comparison of these values and accepted standard values of random consistency gives a consistency ratio. According to Saaty and Kearns, the acceptable limit for this measure is up to 10 per cent, and in some cases 20 per cent can be tolerated.⁵¹ In our survey the consistency ratio varies between 0.83 and 3.17 per cent, which means that the results are completely reliable.

A summary of experts' opinions on objects, ranked by priority, is presented in Tables 2 to 7 of the Appendix. The coverage is as follows

- Table 2 Priorisation of national interests
- Table 3 Priorisation of aspirations
- Table 4 Priorisation of objectives of current policy
- Table 5 Priorisation of goals
- Table 6 Priorisation of aims
- Table 7 Priorisation of threats

The sequence in Tables 2-6 follows the hierarchy discussed earlier and depicted in Fig.1 above (p.11). Getting a clear appreciation of priorities from the tabulated data is difficult. Accordingly the information has been expressed in graphical form and the following pages contain these representations, with a short commentary on each. Respondents put national survival as a state as number one among *national interests* (see Table 2 of Appendix). Usually survival is the highest priority during difficult periods. This is true for individuals, families, nations and states. It is interesting,

⁵¹ See Saaty and Kearns. For a full explanation of this test and of the meaning of the priority 'scores' used as a measure in the data reviewed in this sub-section of the study.

however, that our experts put at second place, with almost the same score, preservation of society's core values. According to them, core values rate a higher priority even than economic vitality and prosperity. Moreover, the difference in scores is significant. A visual comparison of relative priorities of national interests is shown in Fig. 3.

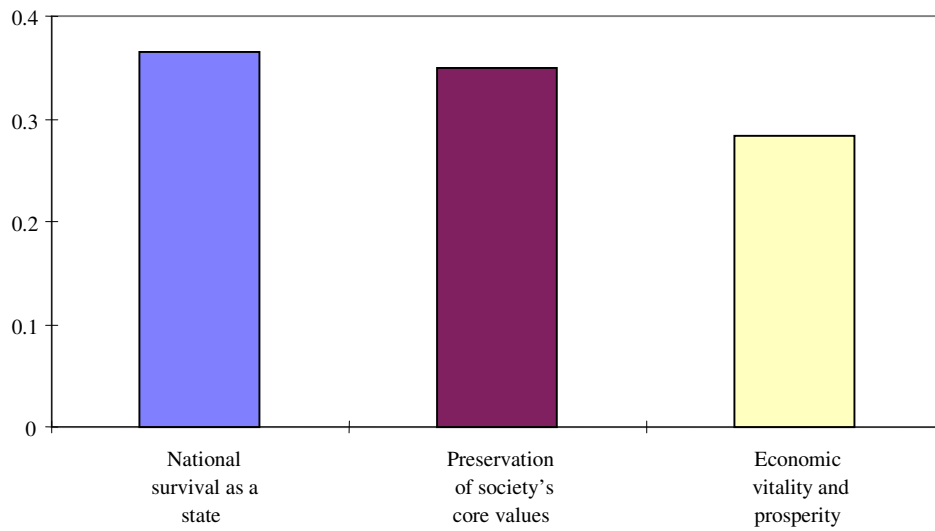


Fig. 3. National interests, ranked by priority 'score'

Among *aspirations*, experts identify (a) safeguarding constitutional rights and freedoms and (b) personal safety as the most important values (See Table 3 of Appendix). They realise that a citizen feels more secure not only when he feels personally safe but when there exist strong mechanisms for protection of the constitution and his constitutional rights and freedoms. From a strategic point of view the most significant aspirations are protection of the state's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Political independence and assertion of national identity have much lower scores. It is clear to our experts, that it is impossible for a small country with a weak economy to be politically independent. More surprisingly, assertion of national identity is overshadowed by more significant aspirations. On the domestic side, achievement of financial stability and economic development is considered vastly more important than promoting social development. We can suppose that experts realise that it is impossible to contemplate considerable social spending, without stable financial and economic conditions. Furthermore, Bulgarians have fresh memories of hyperinflation and collapse of the banking system, which resulted in very serious destabilisation. Priorities among aspirations are depicted in Fig. 4.

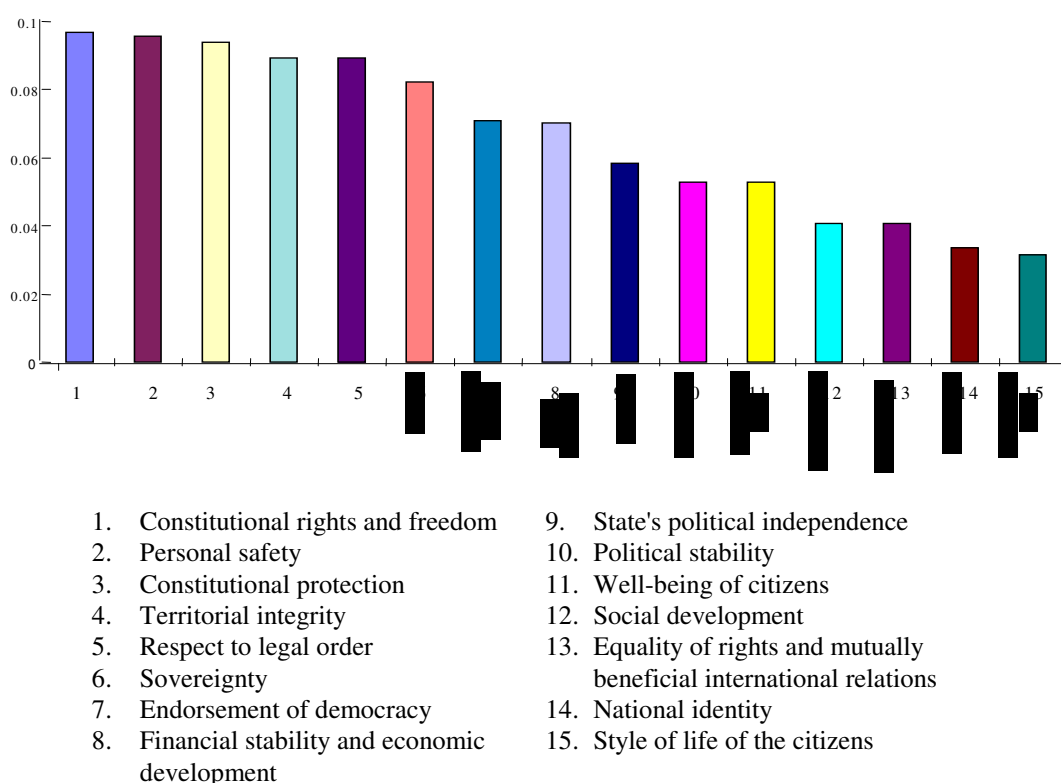


Fig. 4. Aspirations, ranked by priority 'scores'

The analysis of experts' opinions on *objectives of current policy* in Bulgaria (see Table 4 of the Appendix) leads to the following conclusions. A high priority level is given

to conflict, avoidance/prevention, deterrence and defence, and general political, military and economic integration into the world community. These rank higher than social and health insurance, and preservation of national intellectual and cultural values and traditions. Enhancement of the standard of living and quality of life are less important than conflict avoidance and closer integration with other countries. High priority is given also to civilian control over institutions. This objective is even rated higher than development of a market economy. At the same time, experts are sure that civilian control should not conflict with the need to maintain the defence capability of the country. Preservation of national intellectual and cultural values and traditions are more important than safeguarding the rights of religious and ethnic groups. The implication is that if, for example, a religious group opposes national and cultural traditions and values, it might threaten national security. Hence the government should not tolerate its action, even if there is a risk to citizens' freedom of association and the rights of religious groups. Prioritisation of objectives of current policy is presented graphically in Fig. 5.

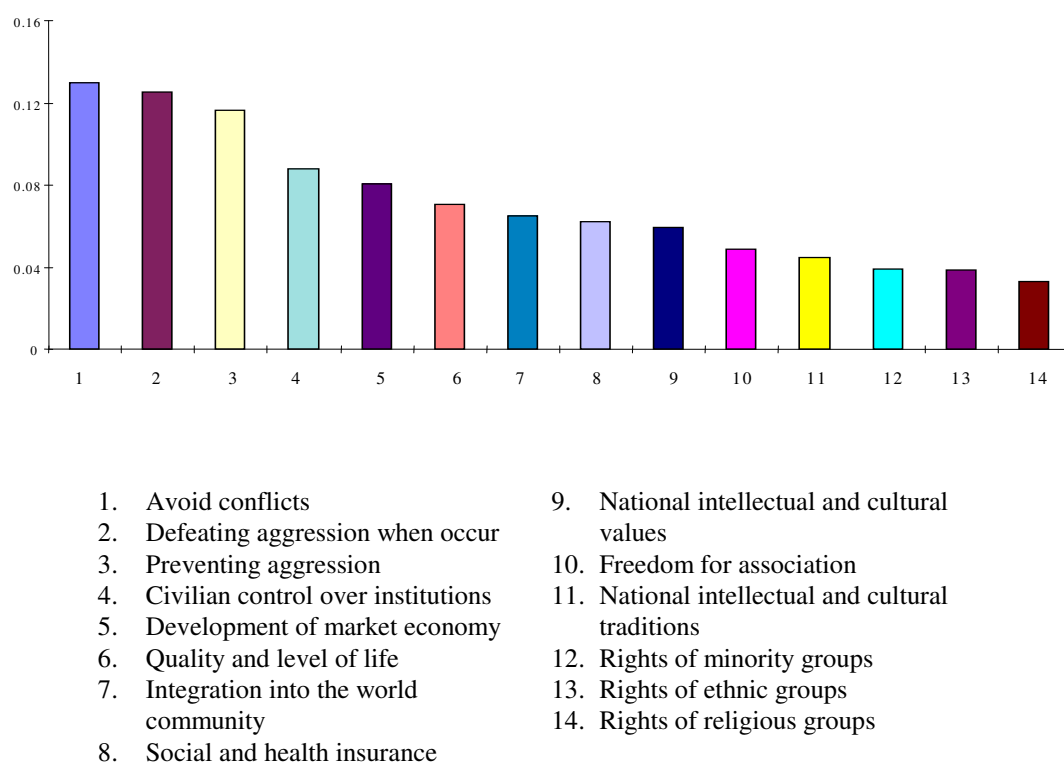


Fig. 5. Objectives of current policy, ranked by priority 'score'

Turning to more specific policy *goals* top priority goes to maintaining adequate defence capability (see Table 5 from in the Appendix). Experts still think domestic defence capability is the surest guarantee for the country's external security. This may be because Bulgaria has made little progress in its integration in security alliances. In

comparing military and non-military co-operation, moreover, experts think military co-operation is the key goal. Maybe this preference can be explained to some extent by fact that participants in the survey were specialists in security affairs. (In my opinion, co-operation in the security area and non-military co-operation should be developed simultaneously. Success in one direction will stimulate developments in the other. In other words, parallel efforts in both directions can lead to positive synergy. Comparison between The most important immediate *aim* for security policy is the pursuit of integration in NATO (see Table 6 in the Appendix). Priorities for policy goals are depicted in Fig.6.

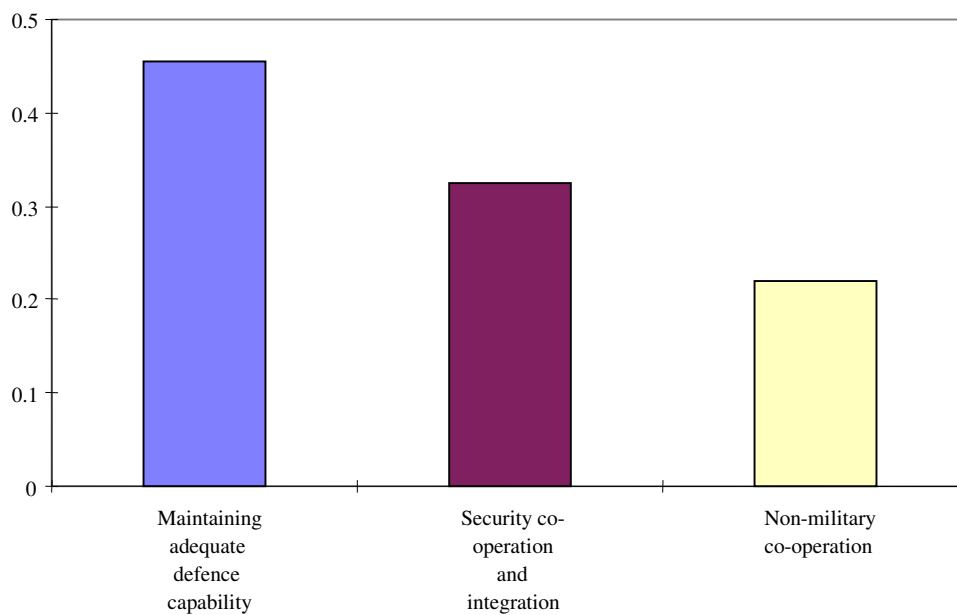


Fig. 6. Goals, ranked by priority

In line with the preference for security co-operation over non-military co-operation, integration in NATO is observed as a higher priority than integration in the EU. Promoting regional co-operation is considered as slightly more important than developing bilateral co-operation. Both regional and bilateral co-operation get a much lower priority than the NATO integration and the promotion of co-operative security measures, however. Experts probably see co-operative security as the best hope to guarantee the security of the country while the question of NATO enlargement is discussed. Information about the relative priority of these aims is presented graphically in Fig. 7.

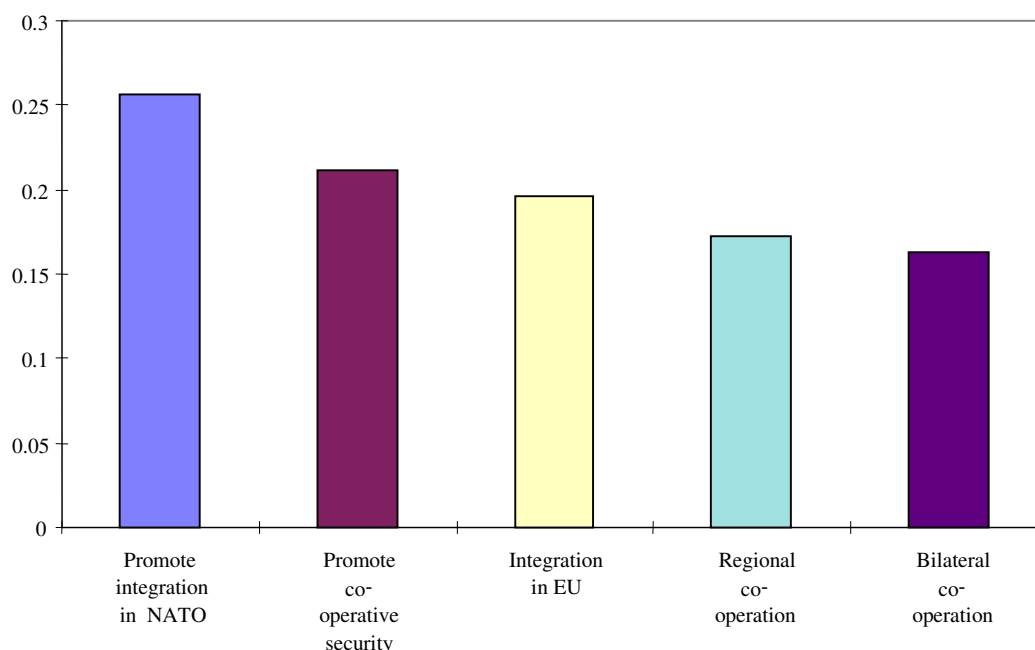


Fig. 7. Aims, ranked by priority 'score'

3. Threats to national security

There is solid consistency in experts' opinions on the evaluation of threats. The consistency ratio calculated for a matrix of probabilities is 0.8, and that for size of negative effect is 1.1 per cent. The conclusion is that these results are reliable. There exist, however, comparatively high differences in individual opinions, notably concerning the size of the negative effect of different threats.

The experts consider the existence of nuclear weapons to be the most intense threat. Obviously they take into account two things. First, there will be negative effect for the country even if such a weapon is used not against Bulgaria. Second, accumulation of nuclear materials creates other risks: terrorism, unintentional use and so on. At the same time, this result may be partly influenced by attitudes from the past, when the possibility of nuclear attack was considered very real. It is not by chance that the probability of this threat occurring is now evaluated approximately equally with the probability of prohibition of access to high technology and that of cross-border aggression. It is the continuing high 'negative effect' associated with any use of nuclear arms which explains the dominant 'intensity' rating.

Threats of the use of biological and chemical weapons are evaluated approximately equally. It is interesting that the probability of use of these weapons is judged to be about the same as the probability of cross-border aggression. Perhaps experts intuitively connect cross-border aggression with the possible use of biological and chemical weapons.

Threats associated with refugee migration and religious and ethnic conflicts near Bulgaria's borders are rated as intense as those from use of biological and

chemical weapons. The 'negative effect' is somewhat less, but the probability ascribed to these sources of threat is higher. It is easy to see why. In south-eastern Europe there are numerous active and latent religious and ethnic conflicts and they regularly produce refugee migration. It is interesting that the scores of negative effect for religious and ethnic conflicts are approximately equal, but the probability of ethnic conflicts is thought to be higher than the probability of religious conflicts. Maybe the explanation of this lies in the fact that the Balkans are furrowed by political and ethical frontiers that are much more important than religious divisions. Tensions in Bulgaria-Macedonia relations, for example, are not caused by religious differences. The religious structure of the population in both countries is similar (just a proportion of Moslems in Macedonia which is slightly higher than in Bulgaria). The divisive issues are language and interpretation of the two states' common history.

Our summary evaluation of the intensity of threats, from the point of view of probability and negative effect, is shown in Fig. 8. Arcs in the figure represent points (combinations of probability and negative effects) of equal intensity.

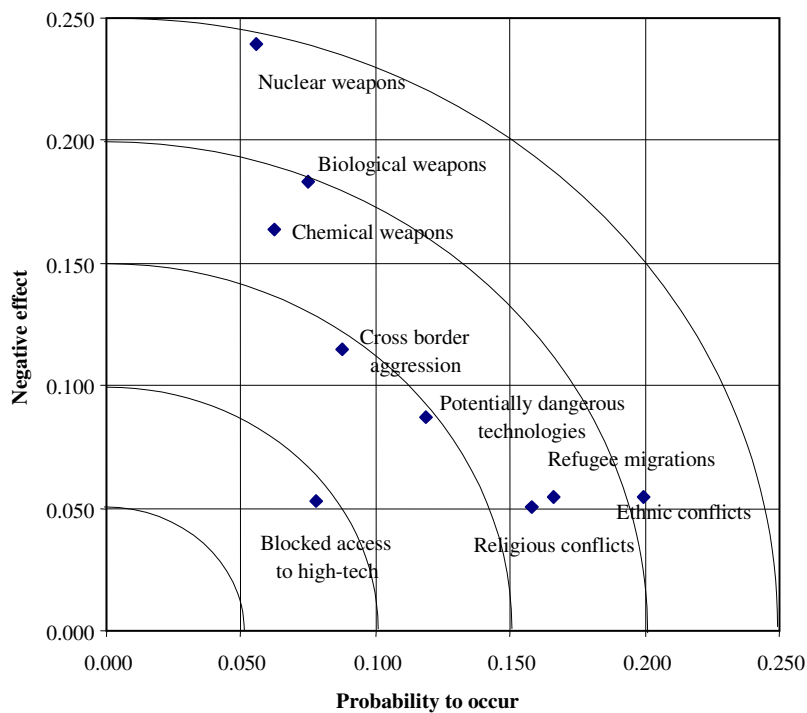


Fig. 8. Threats to national security, ranked by probability and negative effect

VI. CONCLUSION

This study was embarked upon to explore the possibilities of security policy decision-making in Bulgaria, using the methods of the contemporary science of management. Attention to the peculiarity of security policy-making in comparison with decision-making in general, and also its specificity under the conditions prevailing in Bulgaria, led to a specific focus on the analysis of criteria to be used in evaluation of alternative options. It is suggested that appropriate criteria are (a) national interests, aspirations, objectives of current policy, goals and aims; and (b) threats to national security. On the basis of a review of literature sources – statements and articles of politicians, and the work of independent observers – it was possible to develop target variables, located in a sort of hierarchy system. On the basis of a survey of expert opinion specially conducted for this work it was possible to estimate the relative importance of these target variables at every level of hierarchy.

Although the ambitious initial goal of the investigation was thus modified to a more limited aim, it is nevertheless possible to draw some conclusions. In the first place, Bulgaria recently produced an outline of a 'new model' security policy for the post-Cold War and post-Warsaw Pact era. The new *Military Doctrine* was approved by the National Assembly on 8 April 1999 and published – together with statements by the President, Prime Minister and Defence Minister – in a document entitled *Public Charter for the Reform of the Bulgarian Army, the Military Doctrine and the Accession of Bulgaria into NATO*. This appeared in mid-April 1999, having been finished for distribution prior to NATO's Washington Summit (23-24 April 1999). The country has thus, after much delay, finally articulated its current security policy priorities plus an agenda for reform of its armed forces. The question is: does this 'new model' policy accord with the hierarchy of values – national interests, aspirations, objectives, goals and aims – that are important for Bulgaria; and does it address the main present-day threats to the nation's security? The material in this study provides a good basis for answering this question and hence for evaluating these long-awaited policy pronouncements.

In the second place, this analysis of criteria for decision-making, characterised by a demonstration that *is* possible to develop a systematic ranking of what matters to and for Bulgaria, has longer-term value. Circumstances may change, making policy adjustments desirable. When this happens decision-makers should, ideally, look at trade-offs: that is to say, at the extent to which the promotion of one target variable involves the sacrifice of other variables (or the marginal rate of substitution among objectives, in the economists' terminology). By updating priority 'scores' – assessed in the manner outlined here – policy-makers can be alerted to changes in elite perceptions of the security environment. Moreover, the ability to gauge the extent of such changes facilitates the calculation of trade-offs.

In this connection it is worth emphasising that the type of opinion survey conducted for this study, using a pairwise comparison technique, yields information not only about the relative importance of target variables but also about the degree of unanimity among participants concerning the ranking. Furthermore, on the evidence of the experts' views solicited in the particular inquiry here, one can expect a level of

consistency in respondents' judgements sufficient to give confidence in the results of such surveys, despite the fact that participants are not explicitly enjoined to observe the laws of formal logic.

Besides making possible an evaluation of the newly-issued *Military Doctrine* – which, at first inspection, does reflect the priorities elucidated in this study – applying a rigorous test against explicitly-stated criteria is clearly a practice that has wider application. It might, for instance, be used to scrutinise the programmes of political parties: do they or do they not promise to advance national interests and aspirations, as generally accepted? It could be the basis for assessing an outgoing government's performance in office: did the administration address the country's principal security concerns, as broadly understood?

The final word on this investigation, however, must be related not to these possibilities, interesting though they are, but to a conclusion reached at an earlier stage of the research. This is that, contrary to the author's hopes and expectations at the outset, the notion that the formal techniques of contemporary management science can be applied *directly* in the security policy-making arena is almost certainly an illusion. The difficulty lies in the complexity of the criteria problem that has occupied so much of our attention. The appraisal of policy alternatives when one has a simple test to apply, like profit maximisation or cost minimisation, is child's play. Satisfying multiple criteria – interests and aspirations, threats and challenges – poses problems of a different order. Public policy choices are not management decisions, and, while *science* has its part to play in helping make them, politics remains the *art* of the possible – as generations of observers have insisted.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Evaluation of level of consistency of experts' opinion survey

Indicators	National interests	Aspirations	Objectives of current policy	Goals	Aims	Probability of threatening events to occur	Scale of negative effect
Lambda	3.02	15.43	14.30	3.04	5.07	9.10	9.13
Consistency index (%)	1.08	3.07	2.31	1.84	1.80	1.20	1.62
Consistency ratio (%)	1.86	1.93	1.46	3.17	1.60	0.83	1.12

Table 2. Experts' opinion on prioritisation of national interests

List of interests	Priority vector
National survival as a state	0.366
Economic vitality and prosperity	0.284
Preservation of society's core values	0.350

Table 3. Experts' opinion on prioritisation of aspirations

List of aspirations	Priority vector
Guarantee Constitutional rights and freedoms	0.097
Personal safety	0.096
Constitution protection	0.094
Protection of territorial integrity of the country	0.089
Respect to legal order	0.089
Protection of sovereignty	0.082
Endorsement of democracy	0.071
Achievement of financial stability and economic development	0.070
State's political independence	0.059
To provide for well-being of the citizens	0.053
Achievement of political stability	0.053
Social development	0.041
Equality of rights and mutually beneficial international relations	0.041
Approval of national identity	0.034
To protect style of life of the citizens	0.031

Table 4. Experts' opinion on prioritisation of objectives of current policy

List of objectives	Priority vector
Creating conditions to avoid conflicts	0.130
Defeating aggression when occur	0.125
Deterring and otherwise preventing aggression	0.116
Civilian control over institutions	0.088
Development of market economy	0.080
Enhancement of quality and level of life	0.070
Political, military and economic integration into the world community	0.065
Social and health insurance	0.062
Preservation of national intellectual and cultural values	0.059
Freedom for association	0.048
Preservation of national intellectual and cultural traditions	0.045
Rights of ethnic groups	0.039
Rights of minority groups	0.039
Rights of religious groups	0.033

Table 5. Experts' opinion on prioritisation of goals

List of objectives	Priority vector
Maintaining adequate defence capability	0.454
Promote security co-operation and integration	0.325
Promote non-military co-operation	0.221

Table 6. Experts' opinion on prioritisation of aims

List of aims	Priority vector
Promote integration in NATO	0.257
Promote co-operative security measures	0.211
Integration in EU	0.196
Regional co-operation	0.173
Bilateral co-operation	0.163

Table 7. Experts' opinion on evaluation of probability of threatening events to occur and scale of negative effect if the event occur

List of threats	Priority vector	
	Probability to occur	Scale of negative effect
Cross border aggression	0.087	0.115
Weapons of mass destruction (nuclear)	0.056	0.239
Weapons of mass destruction (biological)	0.075	0.183
Weapons of mass destruction (chemical)	0.062	0.164
Refugee migrations	0.166	0.055
Religious conflicts near Bulgarian borders	0.158	0.050
Ethnic conflicts near Bulgarian borders	0.199	0.055
Flow of potentially dangerous technologies	0.118	0.087
Blocked access to high-tech	0.078	0.053

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