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## **SOCIAL SECURITY AND SOCIAL POLICY AS PUBLIC TASKS**

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## **BEZPIECZEŃSTWO SPOŁECZNE I POLITYKA SPOŁECZNA – ZARYS PROBLEMU**

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**Summary:** The problem of social security is closely related to meeting the needs of residents with a focus on inequalities between different groups at both the regional and local levels. Meeting the needs requires the existence and proper operation of certain institutions that solve social issues. It could be said that this is an area linked to and dependent on social policy, which has no clear definition in literature. Without a doubt, in the context of the development of security the essential elements of that policy are such as social policy, labor protection, employment, health, housing, educational, cultural and environmental protection, prevention and combating social pathology, population, family, policy considering the youth and old people. It is obvious that this kind of policy is limited to providing no equivalent benefits.

**Keywords:** social security, social policy.

**Streszczenie:** Problematyka bezpieczeństwa społecznego jest ściśle związana z zaspokajaniem potrzeb mieszkańców z uwzględnieniem nierówności pomiędzy różnymi grupami w środowisku regionalnym i lokalnym. Zaspokojenie potrzeb wymaga istnienia i właściwego działania określonych instytucji działających na rzecz rozwiązywania kwestii społecznych. Można zatem powiedzieć, że jest to obszar powiązany i uzależniony od polityki społecznej, która w literaturze przedmiotu nie ma jednoznacznej definicji. Bez wątpienia w kontekście kształtowania bezpieczeństwa istotne znaczenie mają elementy polityki społecznej, takie jak: polityka socjalna, ochrona pracy, zatrudnienia, ochrona zdrowia, mieszkaniowa, oświatowa, kulturalna, ochrony środowiska naturalnego, prewencji i zwalczania patologii społecznej, ludnościowa, rodzinna, polityka wobec młodzieży czy wobec ludzi starych. Jest to zatem rodzaj polityki, który ogranicza się do udzielania pomocy bez ekwiwalentnych świadczeń.

**Słowa kluczowe:** bezpieczeństwo społeczne, polityka społeczna.

## 1. Introduction

In our country, as in other European Union countries, more and more questions are asked what impact on the safety of society has phenomena occurring in the world economy, including in particular those ones governing the new era of information technology. More and more voices are heard of “depletion of democracy” throughout the state security system. The concept of the need to strengthen the position of the central government so that to provide order (crime prevention, strengthening the structures of the state), grows in strength, even at the cost of restricting the rights of citizens. Therefore striving to discipline society is shown here. This means that the vision of socio-economic development, created as a reaction to the impact of scientific and technical revolution is now becoming the most frequent subject of analysis and research. In the context of social changes the problems associated primarily with the formation of the sphere of social security and defense are gaining in importance.

The aim of the article is to show the relationship between social policy and social security in the context of developing a system of state security, and the need to improve them constantly. Mainly descriptive method and interview method were used for the realization of such a formulated objective.

## 2. Social security

Ubiquitous disorientation (economic, social, political, ecological, cultural) increases uncertainty, which in turn causes the decrease in the subjective sense of security of citizens.

More and more often can we observe the inequalities resulting from the economic status and social position, dehumanizing relationships and the fact that the entire surrounding reality commercializes [Jaworska 2007, p. 87].

It has become necessary to raise public awareness on an unprecedented scale about the sources of the most serious threats and the possibility of limiting them, and above all the need for cooperation with the authorities responsible for order and security in the country. Thus security is the ability to organize and help to protect against threats [Żak 2011, p. 139].

Daily observation of life in our society confirms that encompassing threat increases with greater force. We are dealing with family crises, the growing number of addicts, the poor, homeless, living on the verge of existential minimum. It does not seem, however, that everyone would want to see the importance of these problems. Terrorist threats, all kinds of war, social stratification and all kinds of economic disparities (unemployment, migration, demography) confirm that. It means that the nature of threats which we need to oppose is highly diversified and very often is a consequence of global threats, received in the individual dimension.

The proper functioning of the institutions of state security shall be referred to other adjectival forms of security, including in particular social security that has an area on the one hand fully integrated into the system of state social policy objectives, and on the other hand is subject to rigorous evaluation by the regional and local environment. Hence, social security – as a safety category does not refer directly to the country's defense potential. It is seen as a state of freedom from social threats, which affect the activities of institutions established to minimize these risks and to maintain the desired state. In addition, there is the freedom aspect of social development, which depends on the political environment and economic development.

Social security is primarily a public task performed mainly by public authorities, which should be guided by certain rules. Principles are general directives and standards activities, which should be guided by the entities of social policy in the implementation of basic objectives. Thus the task of social security is the protection against threats that could lead to the emergence of inequality and social disparities.

The adjective “social” always narrows down the issues with meeting the needs of residents with regard to inequalities between different groups. Meeting the needs requires the existence and operation of many social institutions working to solve social issues and welfare. Social welfare, in turn, is a state of high needs of population connected with employment, health, housing, development (education, organization of leisure time, quality of life) and social relations (family, work, place of residence).

Based on the above, attempts can be taken to finally define social security and specify it as one of the categories of national security, which means protecting the existential basis of human life, providing opportunities to satisfy individual needs (material and spiritual), and realize life aspirations by creating conditions for work and study, health and pension guarantees [Skrabacz 2010, p. 38].

### 3. Principles of social security

When determining social security as one of the categories of national security [Skrabacz 2010], we can distinguish the principles of social security, which are presented in Table 1.

Undoubtedly, the main burden of tasks and responsibilities for social security lies with the state, which has to be the guarantor of their implementation. Thus, the implementation of social security (provision) is primarily a public task performed by public administration bodies. In this case, the state must assign specific funds (public funds) for social purposes through the budget. This is due to the multi-dimensionality of social security which has to be provided by the highest form of organization of society, which is the state.

Based on the above, it is worth noting that the political system of every country is not a variable, but among the different concepts of people management, i.e. governance, and the need for a state, particularly noteworthy are three: law, welfare

**Table 1.** Principles of social security

The precautionary principle	Social security of the individual cannot be only the effect of state benefits, but the result of human responsibility for the future of family and oneself, their ability to give up part of the ongoing benefits to meet the future needs and to lead such a lifestyle that minimizes the risk of threats.
The principle of self-help	It manifests itself in the existence and development of mutual help of people struggling with similar problems of life and stronger support for the weaker, usually in the context of small, informal groups.
The principle of social solidarity	Most often understood as a consequence of the transfer of risks of social individuals on society, sometimes identified with social solidarism, meaning the superiority of state interests over the interests of various social groups.
The principle of subsidiarity	The adoption of a specific order in which various social institutions which provide support when the individual alone (using the resources available through the market) is not able to satisfy their needs; firstly assistance should come from the family, next – from the local community, and in the end from the state.
The principle of participation	It is expressed in the organization of social life that individual people have the opportunity to fully exercise their social roles, and groups could deal with the other equal place in society, meaning the right to be a member of social groups and communities and be active in them.
The principle of the common good	It manifests itself in such activities of public authorities which take into account the benefits and interests of all citizens and which rely on the search for compromises where these interests are contradictory.
Multiple sectors principle	It is based on the simultaneous functioning of public entities of social security, non-governmental organizations and market institutions that provide resources and services aimed at satisfying the needs of society.

Source: [Gierszewski 2013, p. 170].

and aid states, in which a different approach to creating social security can be noticed [Skrabacz 2012, p. 140].

State of law is aimed at security, social peace and the protection of private property. State is first and foremost the power structure brought into being as a result of the parliamentary elections. In this model in the first place we put the human rights and ignore the rights of the family and the nation.

In welfare state the state is a manufacturer and distributor of all goods in the name of proclaimed ideas of equality and social justice. The government takes responsibility for providing social and economic security of the entire population.

Aid state is otherwise a community of communities, and its task and at the same time the aim is to protect the personal dignity of the people and the nation. State serves man and society, recognizing their subjectivity. It provides assistance primarily to individuals and small communities in fulfilling their natural duties.

A democratic state (democracy) is literally the power of the people, that is the type of system in which the whole society holds power. Although this is basically one of

the fastest growing political systems in the world (currently global democratization of political, social and economic life is taking place), its weakness should also be noted, which impinge on the development of social security [Skrabacz 2010, p. 146]:

- the weakness of states and public institutions, posing a threat to others,
- crisis of public confidence in public persons,
- a crisis of confidence in the capacity of the state, as an institution intended to ensure acceptable living standards,
- carelessness in the perception of security issues.

Under these conditions, the best solution would be to constantly improve democracy, but in the case of such a concept we should return to rebuild the country and strong state institutions, that is, in principle, to return to the concept of a strong public sector and thus the development of the administration. As stated by A. Skrabacz “[...] the construction of public trust, both for the ruling elites, and the capacity of the state, is one of the most difficult problems, that contemporary democracy is facing. The credibility of politicians, business people and public figures must be based on transparency. The principle of transparency, involves the principle of responsibility for their actions or decisions against those concerned. Due to the social consequences these principles should be particularly strongly accented in the circles of legislative and executive power” [Skrabacz 2010, pp. 146-147].

## 4. Social policy

Social policy is most often understood quite narrowly and includes issues that in officially accepted classification of state functions correspond to the labor market, social security and family support. Roughly it is the equivalent of the competence of the minister responsible for labor and social policy. Sometimes these elements are attached to the issues of health care and rural development. Thus it can be defined as part of the state, local governments and non-governmental organizations whose aim is to equalize the drastic social differences between the citizens, giving them equal and underwritten opportunities by the effects of social risks. Thus, this means that the components of social policy are the following policies: social, labor protection, employment, health, housing, educational, cultural, prevention and combating social pathology, population, family and policy directed at the youth and old people.

In the sense of practice, social policy is therefore action to solve social problems, and as a scientific discipline is to study changes in the social structure under the influence of public authorities and private ones, indicating the need for change.

The easiest way to understand social policy as the study of the activities of public authorities and non-public ones for the benefit of individuals and social groups on the grounds of the need is to:

- support the economically weakest groups (tax exemptions, minimum wages, various benefits, social assistance),

- give equal opportunities to goods and services (scholarships, family allowances, education in the public system),
  - give equality (elimination of discrimination),
  - bely risks of life e.g. through the social insurance system (the Social Insurance Fund and earmarked funds for unemployment).
- Thus this is the action to solve social problems.

**Table 2.** Relations between social policy and social security

	Social policies	Social policy	Social security
Subject	The material conditions of existence, cash income, standard of living, consumption of goods and services	Society, social relations, organization of social life and quality of life	The functioning of the social security system at different levels
Aims	Improving the material conditions of existence (particularly of the poorest), consumption growth, „social peace”, alleviating social issues	Social progress, the balance of social order, the common good, harmony between personal and social goals	Monitoring and solving social problems threatening the security of the state (political stabilization structures)
Mode of action	Emergency assistance, intervention, allocation of benefits.	Prospective prevention, changing social structure, institutionalization	Prospective and ad hoc actions, institutional, legal and organizational

Source: [Gierszewski 2013, p. 166].

Social policies are often associated with: social well-being, needs, social security, social structure, social integration, social issues, human rights, social justice, progress and social development.

As pointed out by J. Gierszewski “[...] none of the elements is the evidence of the direct relationship with national security. On the other hand, linked to elements of security, which is the ability to survive, self-development (to meet the needs, social security, solving social issues) or the opportunities to achieve prosperity” [Gierszewski 2013, p. 167].

Referring to the above, it can be pointed that the institutional system responsible for social policy and social security includes a number of separate institutions that make up the cells of such a system. On this basis, we can say that the tasks associated with social security do so called “administration providing services”, e.g. such a form of government which is used to provide specific benefits or other benefits. Attempts to classify entities responsible for security and public policy, can be presented in Figure 1.

Thus three subsystems can be identified in the system of social security and social policy:

- public – covers the activities carried out by government institutions and local governments,

- informal – include social support and exchange of experiences and services between family, friends, neighbors,
- voluntary – based on the idea of self-help, using local social initiatives.

Central level  
Parliament, the Senate,  
the President  
The Council of Ministers

Voievodship level  
(the voivod,  
administration  
complex,  
council of the province)

Local level (authorities,  
municipalities,  
county)



**Figure 1.** Bodies responsible for social security

Source: based on own work.

Therefore we can conclude that social security entities can be represented by:

- in the strict sense, the public sector,
- the social sector, represented by the public sector and the private sector (initiative of the public and private sectors thus public sector in the broad sense),
- the community sector (social support).

All sectors play a special role in the economy including the security sphere. Their significance can be observed mainly in the layer of state management which is home to government systems and the system of central administration.

However, in terms of social security certain disputes concerning the possibility of financing tasks can be discerned, because the changes occurring in the last period clearly stress the alleged hypertrophy of public institutions as producers of specific goods. One of the conditions of such a position is probably the socio-economic growth in Poland, and a clear return to the broadly defined earlier mentioned localism, which follows even the desire to co-participate in the creation of the image of the near social, economic, political and spatial reality.

This distinction of sectors leads to very important conclusions regarding the possibility of the development of social sector and thus of social security. This type of security appears to be more flexible in terms of its financing, since as far as the public sector should be operated only by public funds, the private sector only and exclusively by private funds for many social sectors, in principle, can be financed from both sources which is not without significance for its further development opportunities.

The rationale for this conclusion lets there be that previous experience has shown that there are very close links between the systems of economic management and the range of features and development potential of the public sector [Broszkiewicz 2006, p. 26].

## 5. Conclusions

The issue of social security has a special importance in the contemporary socio-economic realities. It is so important that the management becomes extremely difficult and at the same time requires a systemic approach embedded in the market mechanism shaped by the forces of supply and demand. This makes it necessary to look through the prism of the changes taking place in the whole public finance sector and, above all, from the point of view of the liquidation of old and new forms of organization – legal sector that allows to provide material and personal system of expenditure at the existing limits. Practice shows that in an era of ongoing changes, limits are insufficient and financial engineering used do not secure high quality services. At this point the question arises what a perfect system of financing of institutions providing social security (especially those listed above) should look like, and what measures of implementing the financing of tasks without compromising their quality and above all their effectiveness should be taken. In what direction will the evolution of public administration in Poland which task is to ensure social security follow? The answer to such questions is not easy, because the changes taking place in the global economy, quite explicitly show the weakening role of the state institutions. To sum up we should also draw our attention to the fact that pathological phenomena have always been an integral part of social and economic life, but thanks to the integration process, social security has gained additional opportunities on an international scale. Depending on the size of the security (of scale), the degree of its organizing and emerging threats, it becomes a prerequisite for the success of business processes on the one hand, and on the other the derivative of level of a given socio-economic space.



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