

# BEFORE AND AFTER EU-NATO ACCESSION SECURITY AND DEFENSE DILEMMA OF SLOVAKIA – HOW A NEW IDENTITY UNDER CSDP (THE COMMON SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY) HAS BEEN BUILD?

**Zahraa Ghazi Fatah-Allah Alhilmee\***

## **Abstract**

*Following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the post-Cold War era saw significant transformation in the Eastern European countries that emerged from Soviet influence. Driven by concerns related to security and economic stability, these nations sought to align themselves with Western institutions, ultimately aiming to gain membership in both the European Union and NATO.*

*The main reason underlying this was that they wanted to get the confidence and peace they wanted as soon as possible. However, they did not delay in realizing that they would not get immediate results on this issue over time and that it was not possible for them to resolve their concerns in this way. It was seen by everyone that neither NATO nor the European Union had addressed security concerns, and that they had to increase defense spending even more. One of these countries was undoubtedly Slovakia.*

*This article examines Slovakia's journey before and after its NATO membership, highlighting how the country, as an Eastern European state, has been striving to develop a new identity within the framework of the European Common Security and Defense Policy. It also explores the security challenges Slovakia faces in the realms of defense and security, as derived from publicly available sources.*

*In general, the research was carried out on the basis of Slovakia and its immediate surroundings to a certain extent also the Visegrad countries. Undoubtedly, it is observed that the same problem is experienced more or less in other Eastern European countries. The research conducted will also reveal some suggestions on how a more realistic structure should be aimed at eliminating the need for security in these regions.*

**Keywords:** *Security, CSDP, Identity, Social Constructivism, Visegrad Group.*

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# NATO ÜYELİĞİNDEN ÖNCE VE SONRA SLOVAKYA’NIN GÜVENLİK VE SAVUNMA İKİLEMİ- CSDP (ORTAK GÜVENLİK VE SAVUNMA POLİTİKASI) KAPSAMINDA YENİ BİR KİMLİK NASIL İNŞA EDİLDİ?

Zahraa Ghazi Fatah-Allah Alhilmee

## Öz

*Soğuk Savaş Dönemi ardından Sovyetler Birliğinin dağılmasıyla, bu ülkeden ayrılan Doğu Avrupa ülkeleri büyük bir dönüşümü yaşamış ve güvenlik ve ekonomik kaygılarının bir sonucu olarak Avrupa Birliği ve NATO’ya üye olmak istemişlerdir. Bunun altında yatan ana neden böylece arzu ettikleri güven ve huzura bir an önce kavuşmak istemeleriydi. Ancak zaman içinde bu konuda hemen sonuç alamayacaklarını ve bu suretle endişelerini gidermelerinin mümkün olmadığını anlamakta gecikmediler. Ne NATO ne de Avrupa Birliği güvenlik endişelerini gidermediği gibi savunma harcamalarını daha da artırmak zorunda kaldıkları herkes tarafından görüldü. Bu ülkelerden birisi de şüphesiz Slovakya olmuştur.*

*Kimlik inşası; kimlikler üzerinden yaşanan, ötekileştirme, birleştirme, bütünleştirme, gelişme, ayrıştırma ya da çözülme gibi süreçleri açıklayan bir kavram olarak açıklanmaktadır. Kimlik inşası diğer yandan var olma süreçlerinin ayrılmaz bir parçasıdır ve kültürel birikimle şekillenen kimlik, benzeşmenin, kaynaşmanın veya çözülmenin alanı olarak hem bir araya getirci hem de ayrıştırıcı bir özelliğe sahiptir.*

*Bu makalede bir Doğu Avrupa ülkesi olan Slovakya’nın NATO üyeliği öncesi ve sonrasına odaklanılarak, Avrupa Ortak Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası kapsamında yeni bir kimlik inşasını nasıl inşa etmeye çalıştığı ve bu doğrultuda güvenlik ve savunma alanında yaşadığı güvenlik ikilemleri açık kaynaklardan elde edilen bilgiler ışığında incelenecek ve bu ülkelerin yaşadıkları sıkıntılara ve bir türlü ulaşamadıkları güvenlik ihtiyacına literatür taraması ile bilimsel bir açıklama getirilmeye çalışılacaktır.*

*Araştırma genel olarak Slovakya ve yakın çevresinde bir oranda da Vişegrad ülkeleri esas alınarak sürdürülmüştür. Şüphesiz aynı sıkıntının diğer Doğu Avrupa ülkelerinde de az ya da çok yaşandığı görülmektedir. Yapılan araştırma, aynı zamanda bu bölgelerde güvenlik ihtiyacının giderilmesine yönelik daha gerçekçi bir yapılanmanın nasıl olması gerektiği konusu üzerinde de bazı önerileri ortaya koyacaktır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Güvenlik, OGSP, Kimlik, Sosyal Yapılandırıcılık, Vişegrad Grubu.

## **1. Introduction - Social Constructivism Model of Identity; New Identity Construction of Slovakia after the Collapse of Soviet Union**

Throughout history, the process of creating a nation, such as Greece, has gone through different stages (Acar, 2018:39).

Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, three Central European countries that were close to each other came together and formed the Visegrad Group in order to cooperate with each other on issues such as military, economic and energy. After Czechoslovakia was divided into two in 1993, it became known as the Visegrad Four with the participation of Slovakia.

The Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) serves as a crucial component of the European Union's Common Foreign and Security Policy, specifically addressing the Union's military and defense initiatives. It provides a framework through which Member States collaborate to cultivate a European strategic culture in security and defense, collectively manage conflicts and crises, ensure the protection of the Union and its citizens, and promote international peace and stability. Slovakia's accession to the EU in 2004 marked a pivotal change in its defense and security posture, sparking significant discussions regarding the construction of a national identity within this new context.

From a social constructivist perspective, this analysis draws upon the theories of Alexander Wendt and Emanuel Adler to explore the shared ideas underpinning the Visegrad Four's approach to the Common Security and Defense Policy. According to Wendt's constructivist theory, national interests are shaped by collective beliefs and ideas rather than solely by material factors. Wendt argues that while all entities have a material foundation - such as bodies for individuals and territories for states - these are given meaning through shared ideas (Wendt, 1995). According to Wendt's hypothesis, identities can be categorized as either personal or corporate. Personal identities refer to "self-organizing and balanced functional structures", which establish a distinction between the self and others, thereby creating a sense of 'I.' When this concept is applied to a

collective entity such as a state, it evolves into a sense of “we” reflecting a group or bloc identity. These personal or corporate identities are formed independently of external influences or the “other” (Wendt, 1994: 224-225).

The emergence of the identification problem/disaster as one of the procedures accompanying a couple of crises of modernism may be evaluated collectively with the lower in danger thresholds in current societies. Behind the current identification disaster, which reasons human beings to understand and interpret people who do now no longer resemble them greater than strangers and greater than others, and which frequently ends in xenophobia, is the circulating of dangers in current society as an ambiguous and uncanny country of being. In Beck’s (2014) Risk Society Based at the reflexive modernization technique that he expressed and advanced round specific subject matters in his later works, the dangers and identities produced via way of means of current society may be referred to approximately the connection between.

January 1, 1993, marks the beginning of Slovakia’s new statehood and evokes significant historical milestones in the nation’s quest for recognition over the past 150 years. One notable event is the national movement in the first half of the nineteenth century, which reached its zenith in 1848-49. During this period, Slovak intellectuals, particularly those surrounding the Professor Ludovit Stur, initiated what Czech historian Miroslav Hroch refers to as “national agitation”. Stur played a crucial role in codifying the Slovak literary language, establishing the foundations of national literature, and drafting the “Demands of the Slovak Nation”, the first political program for this “non-dominant ethnic group”, which combined national aspirations with a broader democratic and anti-feudal vision for Slovakia’s future within the Hungarian state. The second milestone was a real break- through after 1000 years of coexistence with Magyars and other nations in one kingdom. After decades of ruthless “Magyarization,” the Slovaks finally lost trust in the Hungarian state and decided to live together with the Czechs. The “Martin Declaration” from October 1918,

a political document expressing the Slovak will for independence from Hungarians and for a common life with the Czechs, was adopted by a remarkably colorful and representative body of Slovak personalities with different orientations and from different political groupings. The third milestone occurred in October 1938. The “Autonomists” from the Slovak People’s Party gained autonomy for Slovakia that soon changed under Adolf Hitler’s pressure to an independent Slovak state. Stur, Hurban, Hodza, and the other “Men of the Slovak Revival” have been recognized as “men of letters”, enthusiastic priests, and political leaders; they became sort of national heroes (Bútorá and Zora, 1993).

According to Beck, the modern state reached in the historical development of societies (Beck et al. 2003). This period has caused many uncertainties to emerge and danger – the idea of “risk society” based on this danger itself – turned into one of the components of daily life. One of the expectancies of the society from politicians, scientists, technocrats and comparable specialists is they make the uncertainties because of those risks and dangers tolerable. After the Second World War this social shape started to disintegrate, uncertainties started then elevated to complexity, ambiguous members of the family and tactics surrounded societies. As a result, the historical and social experiences resulting from living together are dissolving and, moreover, social inequalities are being individualized. Due to the individualization of inequality, people who are members of society have to choose identities that will define and even determine themselves. This choice is collective. It can be an identity as well as a lifestyle. Thus, identities turn into one of the arrangements that facilitates the reproduction of social inequalities by the capitalist mode of production (Beck et al. 2003).

In terms of social sciences, the concept of identity has been used for the first time in Herberg’s work entitled *Protestant-Catholic-Jew*, written in 1956, to show the co-relation between ethnicity and identity. The adventure of the concept after this period was shaped by texts that were generally handled within the framework of “identity crisis”. The concept

of ‘identity crisis’ was popularized by Erikson, leading to its widespread adoption in the literature. Over time, the term has been applied in various contexts, often with considerable flexibility and, at times, loosely defined (Gleason, 1983: 912). The flexible use of the concept due to its historical development and the explanation of social phenomena that need to be explained with different causality, relational and facts with a flexible concept such as identity make the concept useful for all sub-disciplines of social sciences made it. The research of the “symbolic interactionism” faculty has a unique region withinside the established order of the idea of identification, which began out for use in psychology, social psychology and later anthropology and sociology disciplines and have become one in all their interests. Although symbolic interactionists choose to use the idea of “self” rather than the idea of “identification” at the same time as looking to apprehend and provide an explanation for the social interplay method that shapes the notice of people thru the not unusualplace symbolic structures present in social relations (Gleason, 1983: 917-918), specially Erving Goffman and Peter L. Berger attempted to make clear the sociological context of the idea of identification via way of means of making the transition from the idea of self to the idea of identification.

Within this brackets and views of Beck and Gleason we could say that Slovakia’s proceeding with determining its own policy making structures within its own borders and adapting common the European Union’s security and defense policy as whole acting group. At least that’s what it looks like. However, in reality, it seems that there are problems and concerns about security and prosperity are still largely present. This clearly shows that it is far from actually meeting the security need.

The security policies of the 21st century are shaped by several key principles that have traditionally influenced Western political thought: 1) the peaceful resolution of conflicts and rejection of war, 2) the promotion of tolerance to maintain peace, 3) the advancement of democratization, 4) the preference for market capitalism over socialist economic models, and 5) the implementation of effective governance and policies. However,

it is evident that progress in these areas has been inconsistent across the specified region.

Adapting the concept of identity to social psychology, Tajfel (1970: 96-102) suggested that inter-group relationship processes develop in-group identity and reinforce the sense of belonging, and that these groups' discriminatory behaviors towards groups other than themselves and groups that develop accordingly talked about interrelationships. The fact that similar discriminations and exclusions are starting to occur in these regions also causes the idea that the identity building and integration process has not been successful to gain strength. It can be said that the same issue applies to NATO integration.

## **2. Before and After EU-NATO Member Slovakia as a Newly Independent State (1993–1997)**

It can be said that at the beginning there was hesitation about whether Slovakia would move closer to Europe or America or continue to cooperate with Russia as before.

The ambiguity surrounding Slovakia's international and security policies can be described as a balancing act between East and West. In August 1993, under Mečiar's administration, Slovakia and the Russian Federation signed an Agreement on Friendly Relations and Cooperation. However, by November 1993, Slovak President Michal Kováč formally sought Slovakia's accession to NATO. Additionally, in August 1993, a military cooperation agreement between the Slovak and Russian Ministries of Defence was also signed (Čížik, 2020).

Samson reports that between 1993 and 1998, numerous agreements - totaling eight - were signed between the Russian Federation and the Slovak Republic. Overall, the initial phase of Slovak foreign and security policy, from 1993 to 1997, can be characterized as predominantly oriented towards the East. However, at some point of this era Slovakia's neutrality became additionally regularly discussed (Samson, 1997). According to

Török, the principle intention of Slovakia in this era became to collect global popularity and club in global organisations (Török, 2014: 114).

### **3. Dzurinda's Government and Slovakia's Western Orientation (1998–2004)**

By 1998, Slovakia remained heavily reliant on Russian energy resources and military equipment, yet a significant shift in the rhetoric of Slovak politicians was beginning to emerge. Their statements and policies were increasingly aligned with Slovakia's foreign and security objectives and demonstrated a clear pro-Western orientation. With the change in government, public opinion in Slovakia regarding NATO and EU membership also began to shift. According to Chovančík, statements by Dzurinda and other government officials in both local media and on the international stage underscored Slovakia's commitment to act as a "de facto" NATO member state. Evidence of this policy shift included the cancellation of the Russian S-300 air-defense system, which was incompatible with NATO systems, and the deployment of 150 Slovak soldiers to SFOR operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1999, Slovakia faced a significant international challenge with the Kosovo crisis, which prompted extensive debate among Slovak political parties. While Mečiar's party (Ľudová strana – Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko) viewed Milosević's actions against Albanians as a legitimate defense of Yugoslavia's sovereignty, Dzurinda's administration condemned them as genocide. Despite these internal disputes, Dzurinda's government decided to open Slovakia's airspace to NATO forces participating in operations in Kosovo (Čížik, 2020).

The 2001 Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic was the first document to define the nation's security requirements and framework. Notably, this strategy marked a significant shift in security policy by adopting an active approach to shaping the security environment and emphasizing Slovakia's NATO and EU membership as a core national interest, categorized under vital interests (Majer, 2013). Despite Slovakia's efforts to navigate its



security strategy, it is evident that the prescribed path, while necessary, did not fully address the country's security challenges.

#### **4. NATO or CSDP? Which One Has Much Impact on Security and Defense Dilemma of Slovakia?**

##### **Slovakia as a Member of NATO and EU (2005–2014)**

The Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) was established through the St Malo Declaration of December 1998. This declaration, a collaborative effort between the United Kingdom and France, aimed to develop an independent, EU-wide defense policy capable of addressing crisis management situations (Atlantic Community Initiative, 1998).

The period following Slovakia's accession to NATO and the EU introduced new challenges for the country. With the main foreign and security policy objectives considered achieved, Slovakia's priorities were redefined to focus on "effective membership" in both organizations, as well as on issues related to weapons of mass destruction (WMD), Eastern Europe, the Western Balkans, Cyprus, and the Middle East. Despite these updated priorities, there was a misconception that Slovakia's security had been fully secured (Čížik, 2020).

It is important to note that the principal strategic document for this period was the Security Doctrine of the Slovak Republic, adopted in June 1994. This doctrine was developed by Mečiar's government without collaboration with the NGO sector, which was not yet established at the time. Consequently, the document lacked crucial input from independent experts. According to Chovančík, the report was "chaotic, inconsistent, and devoid of a theoretical foundation regarding the security environment, threats, and national security" (Chovančík, 2008, p. 13). Chovančík further argues that this policy document represented the first attempt to consolidate Slovakia's foreign policy goals and orientation. The Security Doctrine aimed to "ensure the transition from individual defense to collective defense through Slovakia's participation in the Partnership for

Peace Programme” (Tarasovič, 2013). However, over time, these efforts led to difficulties. As the international system struggled to address the issues, it became increasingly entangled in a chaotic environment, which has been criticized as a failure (Alpar, 2023, pp. 97-98).

According to Tarasovič, the Security Doctrine outlined the goal for the Slovak Armed Forces to prepare for countering threats to Slovakia’s sovereignty, including responding to military aggression, repelling air attacks, and defending against ground offensives. It was evident that, given Slovakia’s size and resources, the country would be unable to protect itself effectively without integrating into a network of states with collective defense capabilities. Absent a significant shift in the Slovak political landscape, it would have been challenging for Slovakia to alter its Eastern orientation and advance its integration into European and Transatlantic structures. This pivotal change occurred as a result of the 1998 parliamentary elections.

In the immediate post-accession period, Slovakia’s membership led to the dissolution of domestic state aid institutions, with all authority transferred to the European Commission, resulting in the abolition of the State Aid Authority. Conversely, the responsibilities and powers of the Public Procurement Authority expanded significantly. Although the Commission gained the authority to oversee major procurement processes and, if necessary, initiate legal proceedings against Slovakia, the national competition authority continued to address domestic and local issues. However, the Commission retained the ability to intervene in cases of a cross-border nature or, in certain instances, even in national cases where the local authority struggled to progress.

EU membership has thus been linked to significant changes in the extent of EU influence on corruption in Slovakia and to more profound shifts in the channels through which this influence is exerted. From a broader perspective, the key lesson is that research should extend beyond direct policies and instruments to include those with indirect effects. Additionally, when examining the impacts of Europeanization, it is

important to consider not only regulatory and institutional changes but also other factors (Beblavy & Beblava, 2014).

In short, it cannot be said that the expected aspects of the entry process are fully realized.

## **5. The Period Following Russia's Annexation of Crimea (2014–Present)**

It is not only mere question but one would ask itself; Does NATO really protect Europe in a real sense? Considering, Russia's national security concerns and creating another security threat to the whole European Union member-states and non-member states, beside of the current international terrorism plague and illegal migration crisis that are simultaneously progressing at the same time.

Both the occupation of Crimea, the events that followed and the war in Ukraine have shown that the USA is far from providing absolute security in the region. The security provided is only to the extent of the USA's own security. In today's environment, not only Russia's neighboring states but also Western European states feel this insecurity closely.

### **5.1. Adaptation of PESCO in Visegrad Group**

As prior to its protocols and procedures of adaptation and commitments PESCO (Permanent Structure Cooperation) there were three rounds of projects more than ten for each round with EU-member states commitments to it, however among the member states there is lower-degree of attendance and commitment from the member-states such as Latvia, Denmark, Malta, Estonia, Luxembourg, Sweden, Lithuania, Ireland since it affects their own national interest and sovereignty, although Visegrad Four or Group has shown medium-degree of commitment.

In fact, with a deeper investigation, it is necessary not to ignore the claims that an artificial fear of Russia was created in order to keep the

border regions with Europe and especially Russia together (Alpar, 2023: 132). Despite being put on the agenda for a long time and some studies (PESCO), it has become clear that Europe cannot create a reliable and effective defense security organization within itself. This inevitably makes small states like Slovakia dependent and obliged to NATO.

The term foreigner is used for those who reside within a certain community but are not considered as full members of this community (Türkyılmaz, 2001: 477). The concept of the other indicates exclusion and differentiation with a sense of cultural superiority (Alpar, 2023a: 12). In this sense, it is clear that some of the Eastern European countries are seen differently within the European society.

## **5.2. Foreign Policy**

As discussed in the first part of this chapter, Slovakia's foreign policy orientation should be examined from two perspectives: the official/international perspective and the political/domestic perspective. The official/international perspective is reflected in strategic documents and official statements made by the political elite abroad. In contrast, the political/domestic perspective is evident in domestic policies and public statements by politicians in local media. These two perspectives often conflict sharply, resulting in a foreign and security policy that appears unpredictable and ambiguous. Furthermore, recent events in Slovakia, such as the assassination of an investigative journalist in February 2018, have revealed significant divisions within the Slovak political landscape—between pro-Russian and pro-Western factions—that have also impacted Slovakia's foreign and security policy. It seems that an over-reliance on the EU and NATO may have been a strategic error in this context.

For example, the Draft Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic states that (Security Strategy of the Slovak Republic, 2021, p. 5):

*The primary foundations of Slovakia's security are its active membership in the EU and NATO. Integration into these institutions represents a key element of Slovakia's civilizational alignment, enhancing its international and political influence and development. The EU has become a fundamental space for Slovakia's values and way of life, while NATO serves as a crucial pillar for its defense and security.*

There is indeed a security issue, which is becoming increasingly challenging to address due to existing dependencies. Considering Slovakia's limited resources, the country has consistently engaged in multinational operations rather than relying on unilateral military actions. It is important to note that Slovakia is currently undertaking a significant modernization of its military equipment, including jet fighters, armored personnel carriers, radars, and helicopters. This effort aims to replace outdated and legacy systems and reduce Slovakia's reliance on Russian spare parts.

Slovakia is entirely dependent on Russian oil supplies, a situation also observed in countries like Finland, Lithuania, and Poland. Although theoretically, Slovakia could import oil via the Adria pipeline from Saudi Arabia or other suppliers, the main Slovak refinery is not equipped to process the "light" crude oil from Saudi Arabia. Adapting the existing infrastructure to accommodate this alternative would require significant time (Sona, 2022).

### **5.3. The End of Central Europe – The Rise of Right Wing Radicalism and Dispute Over Identity in Slovakia and Visegrad Group**

Undoubtedly, after the Cold War period, many changes took place in the field of security in Eurasia, which includes Europe. At this point, it is obvious that the great powers had an impact on shaping the Balkans and Eastern Europe (Alpar, 2023b: 61).

The time period 'Central Europe' has long history when it comes to define the future of the region itself however has been sought of nowadays migration crisis and mass media coverage against African workers,

students, expats that were fleeing the war that has been launched by Russian Federation against Ukraine on 24th of February 2022. As noted by Tencsényi, the concept of “Mitteleuropa” emerged as a significant term in international politics during World War I. Earlier geopolitical ideas anticipated this concept, though they did not use the same terminology. In German discourse, “Mitteleuropa” originally described a framework that positioned a German-dominated central region against its Eastern and Western peripheries (Kazharski, 2017).

There is a very close relationship between a country’s geography and its politics (Alpar, 2021).

Although the concept of Central Europe as a geopolitical region situated between East and West has been intuitively understood, the term has been subject to various interpretations. Its meaning has never been fully stabilized, leading to “divergent local usages” across different national and disciplinary contexts (Trencsényi, 2017).

In any case, problems continue for Central Europe, especially security, but this region continues to be left alone in every difficult situation.

According to Neumann, the emerging discourse on Central Europe stemmed from frustration with Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe. As this hegemony began to wane, the discourse started to influence foreign policy debates in the West. A significant moment in this development was the publication of Milan Kundera’s essay in 1983 and 1984, which Neumann identifies as a key breakthrough (Neumann, 1999). In his essay, Kundera argued that nations such as Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia, despite their cultural and political ties to the West, had been subjected to influence from the East (specifically Russia) (Kundera, 1984). What could be defined with post-sovietic trauma for most of the East Europe is that under the term “westernization” they forsake their primordial bond with the region and acting as “advocate of western democracy” against “tyrant and expansionist” acting Russian government.

This continues to create a dilemma and uncertainty about where one belongs.

Kundera conceptualized 'Central Europe' as an integral part of the West that had been artificially divided from the broader Western world by the Iron Curtain. This established a new sphere of thoughts for alienating east (Russia) into others as the opposition to what values represents the Central European countries and identities. This has created a natural binarization and it was directly criticized by Timothy Garton Ash, he stated on the matters of Central European values are not easily to be projected or digested cause of the roots of repression and violence that past experience has major impact on understanding the issue more clearly (Garton Ash, 1986).

The migration crisis introduced a new issue for political parties, prompting them to shift their focus to immigration and portray it as a threat, suggesting it could serve as a "breeding ground for terrorism in Europe and beyond." This shift also provided an opportunity to criticize the EU for its refugee policies, challenging the EU's narrative and solidarity message. The SPR-RSČ, with its strong nativist appeal combining ethnic nationalism and xenophobia, exhibited racist rhetoric against Roma and Vietnamese communities, anti-German sentiments, and opposition to Czech Republic's NATO and EU membership. Additionally, there was criticism of foreign investments and the sale of state-owned companies to foreign firms. The migration crisis further intensified these issues, as reflected in statements such as, "There are problems with the gypsies, but they are still our citizens. Better a gypsy than an incomer" (Valášek, 2016). Similarly, LSNS adapted its rhetoric to the situation, declaring, "We will accept not even one immigrant!... Slovakia is not Africa... We refuse to commit national suicide! We refuse to play the fool!" Jobbik, while more moderate, framed immigration as a security threat, advocating for a "No Vacancy" policy at Europe's borders (Jobbik, undated). This trend is evident in other areas as well, with populism being a central feature of extremist parties' platforms and styles, which are often framed as protest movements (Stojarová, 2018).

Nowadays, it is clearly seen that understanding in the international arena is developing on division and fragmentation and the focus is on differences rather than similarities (Alpar, 2023:129).

The migration crisis prompted various political actors to intensify their criticism of the EU, reinforcing their Eurosceptic, nationalistic, and Christian narratives (as seen in Poland), and emphasizing national values in opposition to what they perceive as the liberal tendencies of Europe (such as LGBT rights, feminism, abortion rights, and euthanasia legalization). This situation reflects a broader trend across many parts of Europe, where rising desperation and identity crises are contributing to significant challenges.

### **Conclusion: Promising future of CSDP for Slovakia?**

The issues related to the security of Slovakia, which are the research subject of this article, are actually valid for the security of all of Europe, including Eastern European countries and even the Balkans, from a broader perspective.

The fact that the imperial powers, who have been looking at Eastern Europe and the Balkans entirely from the perspective of their own interests for almost the last 200 years, interpreted the security of this region based on their own areas of control, prevented this region from seeing itself as secure.

In such an environment, it can be seen that the efforts for the security of the Eastern European region following the Cold War were continued with a superficial perspective and in a way that was not in line with geopolitical and historical realities.

It is not possible for unrealistic efforts to provide security imposed from outside to achieve their goals in the medium and long term.

What needs to be done at this point is for the countries in the region and surrounding areas to come together in accordance with the geographical, historical and cultural realities of the region and to continue their efforts together to ensure their own security.



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## **Geniřletilmiř zet**

Sovyetler Birlięi'nin daęılmasının ardından, Slovakya ve dięer u Orta Avrupa lkesi, askeri, ekonomik ve enerji konularında iřbirlięi yapmak amacıyla Visegrad Grubu'na katılmıřlardır. ekoslovakya'nın 1993 yılında iki lkeye ayrılmasının ardından, Slovakya'nın Visegrad Grubu'na dâhil edilmesi, 2004 yılında Avrupa Birlięi'ne katılımıyla nemli lde etkilenen yeni bir ulusal kimlik oluřturma srecinin bařlangıcını iřaret etmektedir. Bu deęiřim, Slovakya'yı Avrupa Birlięi'nin Ortak Gvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (CSDP) ile uyumlu hale getirmektedir; bu politika, kolektif gvenlięi saęlamak ve uluslararası barıřı teřvik etmek amacıyla bir Avrupa stratejik kltrn geliřtirmeyi hedeflemektedir.

Sosyal inřacılık perspektifinden bakıldıęında, Alexander Wendt ve Emanuel Adler'in teorileri, Visegrad Drtls'nn CSDP'ye yaklařımı baęlamında Slovakya'nın kimlik oluřumuna dair ięrrler sunmaktadır. Wendt'in inřacı teorisi, ulusal ıkarların yalnızca maddi faktrlerle deęil, kolektif inanlarla řekillendięini ne srmektedir. Wendt, kimlikleri kiřisel veya kurumsal olarak tanımlar; ikincisi, kolektif ya da blok kimlięini yansıtır. Bu kimlikler, dıř etkilerden baęımsız olarak oluřmakta ve Sovyetler Birlięi sonrası Slovakya'nın ulusal kimlięinin geliřimini anlamada temel teřkil etmektedir.

Tarihsel olaylar, Slovakya'nın tanınma mcadelesini daha da ortaya koymaktadır. 19. yzyılda Ludovit Stur gibi entelektellerin nclęnde yrtlen ulusal hareket, Slovak edebi dilinin kodifikasyonu ve Slovak ulusu iin ilk siyasi programın taslaęının hazırlanması yoluyla Slovak ulusal kimlięinin kurulmasında nemli bir rol oynamaktadır. Ancak, ekoslovakya'dan Slovakya'ya geiř 1993 yılında Slovakya'nın kimlięini ve Avrupa baęlamındaki konumunu yeniden tanımlamaya alıřtıęı yeni bir dnemin bařlangıcını iřaret etmektedir.

Ulrich Beck'in "risk toplumu" kavramı, modern toplumların giderek belirsizlik ve riskle karakterize edildięini, bireylerin ve ulusların kendilerini tanımlama mcadelesi verdięi bir kimlik krizine yol atıęını ne srmektedir. Bu teori, zellikle Visegrad Grubu ve Avrupa Birlięi'nin gvenlik

ve savunma politikası bağlamında Slovakia'nın kimlik inşasında geçerlidir. Beck, risk toplumunda, bir zamanlar toplumları birleştiren kolektif deneyimlerin çözüldüğünü ve bu durumun eşitsizliğin bireyselleşmesine yol açtığını savunmaktadır. Bu da toplumların bazen sosyal eşitsizlikleri artırabilecek kimlikleri seçmeye zorlamaktadır.

Herberg tarafından 1956 yılında tanıtılan ve daha sonra Erikson tarafından popüler hale getirilen sosyal bilimlerdeki kimlik kavramı, bu olguları anlamada kritik bir rol oynamıştır. Kimlik, Avrupa Birliği içindeki entegrasyon süreçleri de dahil olmak üzere geniş bir yelpazedeki sosyal olguları açıklamak için kullanılmıştır. Slovakia'nın durumunda, AB ve NATO'ya entegrasyon, ulusun kimlik krizini tamamen çözmemiştir; güvenlik ve refah ile ilgili sorunlar devam etmektedir.

Slovakya'nın 1993 yılındaki bağımsızlığını takiben, ülkenin dış politikası, Avrupa ile daha yakın bağlar kurma ve Rusya ile işbirliğini sürdürme arasında bir denge kurmaya çalışmasıyla belirlenmiştir. Bu dönemde Slovakia, Doğu yönelimli bir dış politikayı yansıtan Rusya Federasyonu ile birden fazla anlaşma imzaladı. Ancak, Slovakia'nın 1993 yılında NATO üyeliği başvurusu, Batı kurumlarıyla daha yakından hizalanma isteğini göstermiştir.

Bu dönemde Slovakia'nın tarafsızlığı tartışma konusu oldu ve ülkenin ana hedefi uluslararası tanınma ve küresel organizasyonlara üyelik kazanmaktadır. Slovakia'nın dış ve güvenlik politikası sürecinin bu aşaması, Rusya ile tarihi bağları ve Avrupa ile Transatlantik yapılarla entegrasyon istekleri arasındaki hassas bir denge olarak karakterize edilebilmektedir.

1990'ların sonları ve 2000'lerin başları, Başbakan Mikuláš Dzurinda liderliğindeki Slovakia'nın dış ve güvenlik politikasında önemli bir değişimi işaret etmiştir. Slovakia, hem enerji kaynakları hem de askeri teçhizat açısından Rusya'ya olan bağımlılığından uzaklaşmaya ve giderek Batı Avrupa ve NATO ile uyum sağlamaya başlamıştır. Bu değişim, kamuoyunda NATO ve AB üyeliğini desteklemeye yönelik bir eğilim olarak yansıdı ve

hükümetin Rus askeri sözleşmelerinin iptali ve Slovak askerlerinin NATO liderliğindeki operasyonlara gönderilmesi gibi eylemlerinde kendini göstermiştir.

2001 yılında Slovakya Cumhuriyeti'nin Güvenlik Stratejisi, ülkenin güvenlik politikasında önemli bir dönüm noktası olarak NATO ve AB üyeliğini temel ulusal çıkarlar olarak vurgulamıştır. Ancak bu çabalara rağmen, Slovakya bu dönemde güvenlik ihtiyaçlarını tam olarak karşılamada zorluklarla karşılaşmaya devam etmiş ve dış ve güvenlik politikalarının sınırlılıklarını ortaya koymuştur.

Slovakya'nın NATO ve AB'ye katılmasının ardından, ülke güvenlik ve savunma politikalarında yeni zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. 1998 yılında St. Malo Bildirgesi ile kurulan Ortak Güvenlik ve Savunma Politikası (CSDP), bağımsız bir AB çapında savunma yeteneği oluşturmayı hedeflemektedir. Ancak, Slovakya'nın hem NATO hem de AB'ye entegrasyonu, ülkenin bu organizasyonlara olan taahhütlerini dengeleme yeteneği konusunda sorular doğurmuştur.

1994 yılında kabul edilen Slovakya Cumhuriyeti'nin Güvenlik Doktrini, Slovakya'nın dış politika hedeflerini pekiştirmeye yönelik ilk girişimdi, ancak teorik temeli ve tutarlılığı eksik olduğu için eleştirilmiştir. Zamanla, Slovakya'nın güvenlik politikası, ülkenin sınırlı kaynaklarını ve kolektif savunmanın gerekliliğini yansıtarak, çok uluslu operasyonlara katılım üzerine odaklanacak şekilde evrilmiştir. Bu çabalara rağmen, NATO ve AB'ye entegrasyon süreci Slovakya'nın güvenlik beklentilerini tam olarak karşılamamış ve bu organizasyonların ülkenin güvenlik ihtiyaçlarını karşılamadaki etkinliği konusunda devam eden endişelere yol açmıştır.

Rusya'nın 2014 yılında Kırım'ı ilhak etmesi ve ardından Ukrayna'da yaşanan olaylar, Slovakya da dâhil olmak üzere Avrupa ülkelerinin güvenliği konusunda ciddi endişeler uyandırmıştır. Bu olaylar, özellikle Rusya'nın saldırganlığı karşısında NATO ve AB'nin mutlak güvenlik sağlama konusundaki sınırlılıklarını gözler önüne sermiştir. Bu organizasyonların yetersiz olduğu algısı, özellikle Orta ve Doğu Avrupa'daki Avrupa devletleri arasında artan bir güvensizlik hissine yol açmıştır.



Visegrad Grubu'nda Kalıcı Yapılandırılmış İşbirliği (PESCO) adaptasyonu, başlangıçta umut verici bir gelişme olarak görülse de, birleşik ve etkili bir Avrupa savunma politikası oluşturmanın zorluklarını ortaya çıkarmıştır. Slovakya'nın da içinde bulunduğu Visegrad Grubu, PESCO'ya yalnızca orta düzeyde bir bağlılık göstermiştir; bu durum, ulusal egemenlik ile kolektif güvenlik arasındaki devam eden gerilimleri yansıtmaktadır.

Slovakya'nın dış politikası hem uluslararası hem de yerel faktörlerden etkilenmiş olup, güvenlik ve savunma konularında karmaşık ve bazen çelişkili bir yaklaşım sergilemiştir. Uluslararası arenada, Slovakya'nın siyasi elitleri, ülkenin güvenlik stratejisinin temel unsurları olarak AB ve NATO üyeliğinin önemini vurgulamışlardır. Ancak, yerel politikalar, Slovakya'nın dış politika kararlarını etkileyen Rusya yanlısı ve Batı yanlısı gruplar arasında önemli bölünmeleri ortaya koymaktadır.

2018 yılında bir araştırmacı gazetecinin suikastı gibi son olaylar, Slovakya'nın siyasi manzarasındaki derin bölünmeleri daha da gün yüzüne çıkarmıştır. Bu bölünmeler, ülkenin uzun vadeli güvenliği ve istikrarı hakkında belirsizlikler yaratarak öngörülemez ve belirsiz bir dış politikaya katkıda bulunmuştur.

Tarihsel olarak Doğu ile Batı arasında bir bölge olarak anlaşılan Orta Avrupa kavramı, çeşitli yorumlara tabi olmuştur. Son yıllarda, bölge, sağcı radikalizmin yükselişi ve ulusal kimlik konusundaki anlaşmazlıklar da dâhil olmak üzere önemli zorluklarla karşı karşıya kalmıştır. Göç krizi ve Ukrayna'daki savaş, bu sorunları daha da kötüleştirerek, Slovakya gibi ülkelerin daha geniş Avrupa bağlamında nerede yer aldığı konusunda bir yabancılaşma ve belirsizlik duygusuna yol açmıştır.

Orta Avrupa hakkındaki söylem, baskı ve şiddet deneyimlerinden etkilenen tarihsel deneyimlerden esinlenmeye devam etmektedir. Milan Kundera gibi yazarlar, Orta Avrupa'yı, tarihsel ve siyasi güçler tarafından yapay olarak bölünmüş Batı'nın ayrılmaz bir parçası olarak kavramsallaştırmışlardır. Bu anlatı, kimlikte bir ikililik yaratmış ve özellikle Rusya'dan gelen Doğu etkileri, Orta Avrupa değerleri için bir tehdit olarak görülmüştür.

Sovyetler Birlięi'nin çöküşünün ardından Slovaky'a'nın yeni bir ulusal kimlik oluřturma yolculuęu karmařık ve zorluklarla dolu olmuřtur. Ülkenin Avrupa Birlięi ve NATO'ya entegrasyonu bu süreçte önemli kilometre taşları olarak yer alsa da güvenlik, kimlik ve dıř politikayla ilgili devam eden sorunlar, bu çabaların sınırlılıklarını ortaya koymaktadır. Slovaky'a'nın deneyimi, küçük devletlerin hızla deęiřen bir güvenlik ortamında bölgesel ve küresel politikaların karmařıklılıklarıyla bařa çıkma zorluklarını vurgulamaktadır.

Slovaky'a için yeni bir kimlik inřası sürecinin kolay olmadığı açıktır. Orta Avrupa'da saęcı radikalizmin yükselmesi ve kimlik anlaşmazlıkları, Slovaky'a'nın Avrupa Birlięi ve daha geniş uluslararası topluluk içindeki yerini tanımlama çabalarını daha da karmařık hale getirmektedir. Slovaky'a bu sorunlarla mücadele etmeye devam ederken, ülkenin gelecekteki güvenlięi ve istikrarı, ulusal çıkarlarını NATO ve CSDP gibi kolektif güvenlik düzenlemeleriyle dengeleme yeteneęine baęlı olacaktır.