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# CIVIC ACTIVITY IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR ENSURING SECURITY OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES

**ABSTRACT**

One of the most important manifestations of civic behavior is social activity, related to the community nature of activities, the basis of which should be the conscious and common articulation, implementation and defense of the interests, needs and aspirations of a given social group by its members. Civic activity includes primarily the articulation of the interests of a given social group, control of government activities, civic protests, participation in the processes of preparing and making decisions at various levels of government, and independent management of specific public spheres by directly satisfying social needs, including the need for security. Although traditionally the state remains the most important security entity, its dominant position is expanding to other entities – citizens, society and local communities. The security of a given community can therefore be guaranteed only when, in addition to state entities, members of this community are also involved in its creation.

For civic activity to become a *sine qua non* condition for ensuring the safety of local communities, it must be permanent and formalized. It finds its fullest expression in democratic societies in the third sector, i.e. non-governmental organizations.

The aim of the article is to identify the role that the activity of members of these communities organized in non-governmental organizations plays in ensuring the safety of local communities. The article also aims to identify factors that favor and disfavor the creation of grassroots social initiatives in conditions of deficiencies in civil society, which allow for a more complete understanding of the opportunities and challenges related to the use of social potential to ensure the security of local communities.

The basic research technique used in the article was content analysis. The article analyzes mainly the content of the literature on the subject. Available source materials and existing legal acts were also used. The results of research on the functioning of the third sector in Poland were also analyzed in the text.

**KEYWORDS:** *civic activity, security, non-governmental organizations, local community, local security*

# INTRODUCTION

Local communities can be created by residents of small rural settlements, as well as large cities, urban agglomerations or even entire regions, which obviously causes their great diversity. This diversity, however, does not have a significant impact on the way the local community is understood as a security entity, which remains so as a territorially recognizable structure at the level of a commune, county or voivodeship. The local community as a security entity is characterized primarily by the existence of social bonds, i.e. a system

of relations, connections and dependencies that provide a sense of belonging, community, identity and security. The security of the local community results primarily from the needs of this community, not only basic needs, but also higher-order needs, if security in a social group is considered as such. Public institutions are mainly responsible for meeting these needs, which obviously places the security of local communities primarily in the functions of public administration. However, the unique role of the state and its bodies in creating security and its conditions should not limit the subjectivity of community members in this aspect, especially in the local dimension. State institutions should primarily respond to the needs of local communities, not create them. Recognizing specific needs, meeting them, overcoming challenges, taking advantage of opportunities and minimizing risks may only be possible within local systems, within a given community. Local security can therefore be guaranteed only when, in addition to state entities, members of local communities are also involved in its creation.

Civic activity is extremely important because citizens often solve their own problems more effectively than public administration. They do not work alone but together with other people. Their work is more effective the more individuals it affects and the more organized it is. Nowadays, the most important collective form of citizen cooperation are non-governmental organizations. They are an essential element of civil society in truly functioning democracies because they are an expression of citizens' voluntary and independent involvement in social matters. Individuals can act informally and self-organize spontaneously, temporarily or incidentally, but for civic activity to become a fundamental condition for ensuring the safety of local communities, it must be permanent and formalized. The fullest expression of its institutionalization in democratic societies are non-governmental organizations, i.e. third sector organizations.

The aim of the article is to identify the role that the activity of members of these communities organized in non-governmental organizations plays in ensuring the safety of local communities. The article also aims to identify factors that favor and disfavor the creation of grassroots social initiatives in conditions of deficiencies in civil society, which allow for a more complete understanding of the opportunities and challenges related to the use of social potential to ensure the security of local communities.

The article focuses on the following questions: What role does the civic activity of members of these communities associated in non-governmental organizations play in ensuring the safety of local communities? What type of action and in what areas should be undertaken so that, thanks to the involvement of local community members, it is possible to improve the security of these communities?

The article analyzes mainly the content of the available literature on the subject. Available source materials and existing legal acts were also used, and reference was made to the analysis of research results conducted by independent research institutions that have been focusing for many years on the issues of the activities of third sector organizations.

## Security of Local Communities

Defining the security of local communities involves the need to refer to the issue of local security, the analysis of which refers to the possibility of adopting a broad or narrow perspective. The first one combines local security with the scope of state security and considers it as *a certain state of security and the ability to neutralize the scope in the geographical scope of neighborhood, primarily bilateral and multilateral connections, of state entities that do not have direct influence on the territorial (sub-regional, regional) or global) dimension of security* (Fehler, 2009: 23). The second one, from which local security comes as an element of the internal security of the state and registered as *a type of social governance based on natural relationships and horizontal contacts of a personal nature* (Fehler, 2009: 23). The harmful approach is related to relationships and prisoners, which places the local community in the center of attention.

The local community can be considered in the context of a place or area, as the main organizing principle of social life. The literature on the subject emphasizes the importance of space for the local community, which *occupies a specific space, with its own name and its own local social tradition* (Sowa, 1988: 22-23). **The local community can also be treated as a community**, emphasizing interpersonal ties, personal and emotional contacts, without necessarily linking it to a specific territory (Starosta, 2000: 97-98).

The essence of such a community is expressed in: (1) recognizing and experiencing the same cultural values and symbols, (2) objective dependencies and relations that are the result of interpersonal interactions, (3) compliance with the principles of social order, cooperation and communication, the space of which is clearly social and is a platform for activities of a specific population. Territoriality in this case applies both to the operating units and to the objects at which these activities are oriented (Starosta, 2000: 98). Locality can also be treated as an ideology that is the foundation of local development, and which *involves the initiative and active participation of people living in a specific territory and being members of the local community. This development takes place on four levels: economic, political, civic (social) and cultural. The condition for local development is the strong involvement of society members, because full decentralization will not be successful if the community's belief in the need to manage its own affairs does not become an automatic reflex of every person* (Sosnowski, 2000: 445).

Taking actions, especially joint ones, is necessary to transform the inhabitants of a given town from a local collectivity into a local community. Researchers emphasize that *a necessary condition for the creation of a local community is the existence of a social community inhabiting a specific territory, constituting the basis for the inhabitants' daily social activity and the premise for shaping social bonds. When, in the process of everyday life, individuals enter into lasting and direct relationships with each other, creating strong local bonds and various forms (forms) of organizing collective life, then the local community is formed* (Barański, 2000: 151-152).

The process of building one's own security must involve local communities not only due to their belonging to a given territory, but also because of civilization changes taking place on a global scale. The renaissance of localism has become a process beneficial to European integration. The principle of subsidiarity was recognized in the Maastricht Treaty (The Treaty on European Union) as one of the foundations of the existence of the European Union, thus recognizing that the subject of politics, in addition to the central government, is the regional and local authorities. This paved the way for the emergence and development of local and regional social movements, which gain more and more opportunities to articulate and pursue the interests of

their members and strive to acquire increasingly broader political prerogatives. A global trend is also becoming popular, which gives importance to local values and understands localism as opposition to extensive bureaucracy and the growing distance between the governed and those in power (Chodubski, 2003: 43-59). Local communities do not want to be anonymous. They are associated with a specific space, having a specific name and social tradition. Locality is often identified with the so-called a small homeland (private homeland) (Ossowski, 1984), which is a place where basic needs are met and within which one wants to have the right to decide on matters important for the community, because they are best identified and the state authorities are *far away* from these needs. There are, of course, areas of activity reserved exclusively for the state, but the process of delegating authority from the state level to the local level has become a social and political norm in Europe. This state of affairs was influenced by many factors, the following being particularly important (Sosnowski, 2000: 432):

- inability to effectively manage large structures without resorting to local creativity,
- the critical attitude of societies towards the welfare state, which leads to the belief that in many situations it is more beneficial and effective to refer to community traditions,
- social reaction to the increase in centralization in state management, which resulted in a turn towards devolution, i.e. the transfer of competences in resolving regional and local problems from central administration bodies to local administration bodies,
- the fact that centralization (political, economic, civic) weakens democracy.

Engaging citizens in the process of building and maintaining the appropriate level of local security is therefore a difficult process. It requires the creation of mechanisms for reconciling the needs and interests of specific communities, represented by local entities, with the needs and interests of the general community, represented by state entities.

In order to provide the local community with appropriate conditions that constitute the basis for its security, the following needs should be met (Lisowski, 1998: 114):

- ensuring personal safety in public spaces,
- ensuring public safety,
- ensuring public order,
- effective protection against local devastation and environmental pollution,
- access to educational institutions,
- care for the local labor market,
- access to a commercial and service network that meets basic subsistence needs,
- access to social assistance benefits in crisis situations,
- ensuring access to medical services,
- access to care services for children and adults who need them,
- access to common courts and immediate adjudication and other forms of necessary legal service and assistance,
- existence and availability of necessary communication and transport routes,
- the existence of a communication network and information flow inside and outside the local environment,
- ensuring that users of housing resources are connected to municipal infrastructure,
- access to recreational areas.

Meeting the above needs of local community members is important from the point of view of contributing to their security. Ensuring the safety of local communities is therefore one of the basic functions of public administration. However, its analyses should also take into account other institutions that are important contributors to local security in social practice. The police, fire brigade, emergency medical services and other services dealing with the protection of life, health and property, i.e. public safety and order, deserve special attention here.

Ensuring the safety of local communities, as well as social groups and individuals, is one of the basic functions of the state. They are achieved through the proper operation of its structures and state administration bodies.

Administration of security matters is one of the elements of the subsystem of goals, tasks and values of the entire public administration system (Wrzosek, 2008: 24). According to some researchers of the problem, *the essence of action to guarantee the safety of citizens and public order comes down to purposefulness, as a guideline for actions taken by public administration* (Osierda, 2008: 18). For this reason, all activities undertaken to ensure the safety of local communities should be generally focused on the following aspects of the functioning of a given community (Mituś, 2008: 224; Kitler, 2006: 45):

- protection of the legal order and way of life in force in a given community,
- protection of community members against natural threats (e.g. elements),
- protection of community members against threats from individual members or entire communities, as well as from other people and social communities,
- protection of material and immaterial goods (intellectual, spiritual, cognitive), the threat of which causes economic dangers, affecting the status of a given community.

The inclusion of individuals and social groups in the process of creating the public sphere and implementing specific activities in it has become one of the fundamental factors in the creation of a civil society, which is based on the principles of participation and civic responsibility. It is also an expression of the transformation in the structure and organization of public administration, which is evolving towards the so-called participatory public management, i.e. representatives of public administration bodies remaining in constant interaction with society (Hausner, 2008: 23-24).

# Non-Governmental Organizations – Third Sector

The theoretical concepts of non-governmental organizations refer, on one hand, to the theory of state failure, and on the other hand to the theory of market failure. The state and the market *are unable to satisfy all human needs, so other types of institutions are needed, of a complementary nature, located between the state and the market* (Gliński, 2005: 173). The concept of non-governmental organizations is currently used, both in Poland and around the world, to define the area of civil society institutions operating socially and not for profit. In legal documents, the term *non-governmental organizations* is used to refer to entities that are considered to be the so-called the third sector, existing alongside the state and private sectors. The concept of a sector is understood as *all those organizations which – despite the complexity of their organizational forms, different origins, different sources of financing and forms of operation, as well as diversified resources – are subject to similar legal regulations and to which fiscal policy assumptions are similar in assumptions* (Leś, 2000: 16). The criteria that distinguish the above-mentioned sectors from each other are primarily the purpose for which they operate and the ownership of the entities. *In the economic sector, the activities of private entities are aimed at profit, in the public sector – for the common good, the non-governmental sector, although it is non-public, like the economic sector, pursues public goals, operates not for profit and for the common good, just like public authorities* (Moroń, 2012: 14-15).

Non-governmental organizations can be defined as *specific, modern forms of social self-organization, structures integrating groups of citizens, which are characterized by a relatively mature social identity, a certain degree of organization, private nature of initiatives, voluntary participation, independence and non-commercial nature, as well as – generally – a significant share of volunteering and an important role in shaping human attitudes (both of people participating in organizations and having any contact with them). An important criterion distinguishing non-governmental organizations is also their area of operation, i.e. – generally – the public sphere or the sphere of non-institutional politics* (Gliński, 2005: 170). The specific properties of non-governmental organizations are considered to be: *spontaneity, innovation, creativity, flexibility*

*in action, accessible membership and attractiveness thanks to altruistic origins, commitment and willingness to make sacrifices among people working in these organizations, good recognition of social needs and problems (…) and the ability to solve them (…), relatively low operating costs (…), shaping mature group social identities and a sense of community and group solidarity (…), commitment to development and not falling into the routine typical of mass societies, serving people and communities without intermediaries* (Gliński, 2005: 176).

Although the practical dimension of the activities of non-governmental organizations comes down primarily to the provision of services that neither the state nor the market is able or willing to provide, various names of non-governmental organizations can be found in the literature, referring to various characteristics distinctive of them (Schmidt, 2013; Moroń, 2012; Wysocki, 2011; Kurleto, 2008):

- non-governmental organizations (NGOs): operating on the basis of the philosophical principle of independence from the state;
- non-profit organizations: the basis of their activities is the principle of non-participation in the profits earned by the organization, as well as the obligation to transfer all profits to statutory activities;
- charitable organizations: the main purpose of their existence is to help the poorest, sick or disadvantaged individuals;
- social organizations: performing broadly understood social work;
- voluntary organizations: the principle of their operation is a significant share of voluntary activities;
- intermediary organizations: acting as a transmission path between the state and private sectors;
- civic organizations: operating on the principles of social self-organization, and the main goal of their activities is the integration of groups of citizens;
- public benefit organizations: operating in the public sphere and in the broadly understood public interest.

In connection with variety of social needs that non-governmental organizations are established to meet, there are a number of functions that they are supposed to perform. *The functions of the non-profit sector can be considered*

*as functions towards the individual and functions towards society, but this is an artificial division, of an ordering nature, because any impact on an individual affects the entire society and vice versa – the impact on society is important for individuals* (Sowa, 1988: 107).

The beginnings of a systematic description of the functions of non-governmental organizations and attempts to classify them in Poland are related to the birth of civil society and the development of the third sector, especially at the turn of the 20th and 21st centuries. Therefore they can be divided into two basic groups: socio-political functions and economic functions.

The socio-political functions performed by non-governmental organizations include (Moroń, 2012: 93-96; Gliński, 2005: 177):

- identification and articulation of the interests and needs of various social groups, especially minorities and discriminated groups, which often take the form of advocacy;
- expression of aspirations and interests enabling joint action, but also the expression of social protests;
- integrating society and social inclusion of groups at risk of marginalization;
- caring for the common good and guarding this good;
- building and diversifying public opinion, organizing space for discussion around controversial social issues;
- initiating social changes;
- participation in the decision-making process of the authorities and supplementing state activities, managing non-governmental spheres;
- control of government activities at various levels of its functioning;
- signaling the emergence of social tensions and conflicts, as an element of the social early warning system;
- creating and multiplying social capital, primarily in the form of social trust;
- educating society and shaping civic culture, and therefore building democracy.

The economic functions performed by non-governmental organizations include (Moroń, 2012: 93-96; Gliński, 2005: 177):

- employing and creating new jobs;
- training future employees, passing on role models and values at work;

- providing services, especially those of a social and educational nature;
- formulating innovative development visions and alternative development programs;
- control of the use of public funds and goods;
- limiting expenditure on social benefits due to the inclusion of marginalized groups and groups at risk of marginalization in social life;
- indirect support for economic development by building social capital.

The nature of the activities of non-governmental organizations and the wide scope of their influence mean that they become involved in the functioning of spheres that were previously reserved for the state, including: in terms of safety. Many organizations operate in the field of public or social security. Organizations dealing with ecological security and pro-defense organizations are gaining in importance. The need, and to some extent necessity, to involve non-governmental organizations in various areas of security is primarily related to the fact that the threats in the modern world largely concern the civilian population. For this reason, society should be prepared, organized, and trained to take actions that will minimize threats in the future and ensure the safety of themselves and other people. Non-governmental organizations are perfect for this type of activities, as they not only mobilize individuals to act, but also focus, structure and direct their activity.

## Activities of Non-Governmental Organizations for the Security of Local Communities

The increasing activity of non-governmental organizations in spheres of social life that have so far been identified mainly with the functioning of the state and the duties of public administration is also related to the constitutional principle of subsidiarity applicable in Poland (Constitution of the Republic of Poland, Journal of Laws of 1997, No. 78). , item 483, as amended), which calls for performing tasks and solving problems *closest to the citizen*. A higher level of government should take over only those tasks and competences that,

by their nature, do not fall within the properties of the lower level of authority. Therefore, only those issues that cannot be successfully implemented at the family or local community level should be transferred to the state level.

The principle of subsidiarity is, at its core, a continuation of the idea of *social personalism* and the *activating state*, which assume that citizens should be allowed as much freedom as possible, and the role of the state should be to activate civil society and strengthen the independence of individuals by providing them with support and providing only the necessary assistance (Leszczyński, 2011: 116-117). Relations between the state and citizens should be based on responsibility and mutual trust, which is to be supported by a specific hierarchy in the competences of the authorities. Solving local problems lies within the competences of local government authorities, and the intervention of state authorities is only justified as a subsidiary, taking into account the scale of the region or the entire country. In order for the implementation of local government tasks to be possible, regionalization and decentralization of the state must be correlated with the transfer of the necessary financial resources to them by the central authorities. At the same time, state institutions should strengthen social ties at the local and regional level. Social practice shows that it is not always possible to synchronize these required elements. Therefore, local governments are often faced with the need to look for support and cooperation partners among other non-state entities. They are often found in the third sector, which is the embodiment of the idea of civil society at the local level. Non-governmental organizations, as forms of social organization, located outside the state administration system, have a diverse nature and a wide scope of activities, serving various purposes, therefore they have a rich offer and constitute an attractive object for cooperation for local governments (Strus, 2014: 66-73).

It is worth noting that the nature of non-governmental organizations and the degree of their activity depend on many local factors, including: the shape of the local social structure, the level of education of the local community, the level of employment and unemployment, the scope and nature of social pathologies, the general level of social activity, the level of social capital, the degree of social integration, the type of local political culture, local traditions, customs and customs, or the level of civic awareness (Baron-Wiaterek, 2010: 140).

This *local character* means that non-governmental organizations are deeply embedded in local communities, know their specificity and recognize their needs well, which is why they effectively recognize local problems and present a more individualized, often debureaucratic and depoliticized approach to solving them. The *local specificity* of non-governmental organizations allows them to engage in security activities primarily at the local level, although their supra-local projects in this area are not without significance (Pacek, Szmidtka, Jakubczak-Krawczyńska, 2017: Skrabacz, 2006).

Non-governmental organizations, in addition to providing specific support to local authorities in the field of security, e.g. rescue, protection of people, goods or the environment, assistance to injured people or eliminating the effects of disasters and natural disasters, can also have a real impact on shaping civic attitudes, especially among younger people. They can also motivate individuals and social groups to take initiatives to ensure the security of their country or region, but also of their city, village or even housing estate. The activities of non-governmental organizations to prevent local threats and eliminate their effects are of great importance. The specificity of these threats means that local non-governmental organizations are often more effective than professional entities established to counteract them, as they are better versed in the current situation and are more motivated to ensure order in their own territory (Pacek, 2017: 88). The mentioned orientation and motivation are particularly important in small communities – villages and towns, where counteracting threats by specialized entities, focused mainly on large cities and urban agglomerations – gives way to support provided by self-organizing social entities.

The self-organization of local communities for security, initiated by non-governmental organizations, is associated with their important role in taking actions to educate for security, especially conducting training and preparing to deal with local threats and their identification. The level of knowledge of local community members regarding their own safety is a factor that actually influences its condition and the extent of losses incurred as a result of a possible threat. In this respect, non-governmental organizations can become active in schools and other educational institutions by organizing social campaigns informing about potential threats or social pathologies, as well as developing skills in dealing with threat situations. They can also create and

run advisory or intervention centers that provide information and support to people or groups already at risk, or even provide care to injured people. Finally, they can take part in restoring normality in the functioning of local communities after a possible threat.

The educational activities of non-governmental organizations in the local environment for safety also involve creating training for community members in the field of rescue and first aid, as well as conducting practical exercises in this area. Qualified NGO's members can also support professional services during rescue operations. Including involvement in organizing possible humanitarian aid and its distribution in the event of disasters or natural disasters. The latter may also constitute a theoretical subject of the educational functioning of non-governmental organizations, as an element of ecological education and preventive activities for environmental protection. Non-governmental organizations may engage in promotional activities for the protection of the environment and natural resources, both on a local and supra-local scale. In this respect, the third sector has extensive opportunities to cooperate with public administration, as well as to exert real influence on local and government authorities in order to implement projects aimed at improving the condition and quality of the environment. It has the opportunity to act as a spokesman for local communities and articulate their needs in terms of ecological safety. It may also continuously monitor the authorities' conduct in this aspect, as well as in other areas of security. Non-governmental organizations also have tools to detect irregularities and abuses committed by representatives of all levels of government, and thanks to cooperation with the media, especially local ones, they can quickly inform the public about them. On the other hand, non-governmental organizations can provide the authorities with information about social needs and expectations regarding security, becoming a kind of transmission path between the governed and those in power. Selected members of the organization can advise local governments on security-related issues and even cooperate with the administration and local services in monitoring and counteracting local threats, as well as developing expert opinions on security or proposing innovative solutions in this area. The possibility of financial, personal and material support for uniformed services or internships, e.g. by purchasing equipment or sponsoring rescue or police operations, is invaluable.

Another dimension of the activities of non-governmental organizations in the field of education for safety in the local environment is related to undertaking activities in the field of prevention of social pathologies. One of its forms is to raise awareness, especially among children and adolescents, of the existence of pathological phenomena and how to eliminate them. For this purpose, representatives of non-governmental organizations create local clubs, bonfires and community centers where young people can spend their free time. Creating various preventive programs to develop skills in dealing with potential threats. Conducting training courses on how to behave in situations of immediate threat to health or life, e.g. self-defense techniques courses. Constructing alternative programs for groups from communities at risk of pathologies or exhibiting pathological behavior, or finally those that have come into conflict with the law and require inclusion in a social reha-bilitation program. Non-governmental organizations also provide assistance to people who leave prison after serving even long-term sentences, including counseling in finding a job or other sources of income, as well as providing legal and psychological advice.

The group of tasks that non-governmental organizations can carry out in the field of education for security in local communities also includes defense education. It is manifested primarily in the upbringing of children and youth with respect for the patriotic and defense ethos and the popularization of the knowledge and traditions of Polish weapons. Third sector organizations may cooperate with local educational institutions in order to, for example, organize celebrations of important holidays or national anniversaries. They may also be involved in organizing defense and military knowledge competitions as well as training and military competitions in these facilities. It is also possible for NGOs to cooperate with universities with local branches, not only military ones, by stimulating the defense activity of students of various fields, especially those not related to security sciences.

*The activities of non-governmental organizations in the field of self-organ-ization of the population for security should focus primarily on stimulating defense awareness, i.e. developing the habit of constant vigilance and response to external and internal stimuli, without which it is impossible to function in the modern world* (Skrabacz, 2006: 191). It is equally important to develop

defense skills and habits, in which non-governmental organizations can engage by developing training in military specialties, especially for young people, but also by conducting survival training or courses. Pro-defense organizations, in particular, have a huge role to play in this respect, as they include not only enthusiasts, but also professionals and professional representatives of uniformed formations. This is important primarily in the context of creating a positive image of the army and its social reception, but also in the aspect of creating social consensus on the issue of broadly understood security, not only local.

## Conclusions

Non-governmental organizations, due to their *local nature*, have much greater opportunities to engage in the implementation of tasks related to the security of local communities than, for example, in the field of national security. In local communities, especially small towns and villages, there is also an increased demand for support from non-state entities to meet the security needs of residents. However, the role of the third sector in ensuring the security of local communities will always be regulated by state law and the state of functioning of the state (Skrabacz, 2006: 225). Therefore, the tasks of non-governmental organizations to ensure security will be different in times of peace, different in times of crisis, and still different in times of war. According to Polish law, the activities of non-governmental organizations during war or martial law may be suspended (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 156, item 1301, as amended; Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 117, item 985, as amended), may, however, be used to conduct military operations.

According to the above, the tasks of non-governmental organizations to ensure the safety of local communities can be summarized as follows:

1.  in peacetime:
    *   mobilizing local communities to self-organize for security, not only local security;
    *   education for safety, implemented primarily in organizing training, courses, preventive programs, alternative programs, and social rehabilitation programs for members of local communities;

- recognizing, monitoring and preventing local threats and social pathologies;
- identifying social needs in the field of security and informing local authorities about them;
- supporting local authorities, public administration, services and guards in the field of activities for local security;
- controlling the activities of these institutions and detecting irregularities in their functioning;
- advising, preparing expert opinions, introducing innovations in the field of the security system and its organization;
- cooperation with educational institutions and participation in the process of patriotic education of the young generation;
- taking specific actions in the event of threats to local security, participating in rescue operations, providing assistance in the event of natural disasters and catastrophes;
- sensitizing the community to the issue of contemporary challenges and threats to security, not only local security, and creating a positive climate around security issues, the armed forces and uniformed services;

2. during the crisis:
- involvement in rescue operations; saving life, health and property;
- providing social, psychological and spiritual assistance to people in need or harmed;
- organizing possible humanitarian aid;
- providing personal, material and financial support to public administration, services and guards working for security;
- counteracting the growth of deviant and pathological behavior among members of the local community;

3. during the war:
- organizing armed self-defense on a local scale;
- shaping defense awareness and maintaining social morale in the local environment;
- supporting and strengthening the will and fighting spirit of both members of the local community and the army;

- providing personal, material and financial support to local authorities and the army;
- conducting enemy surveillance and sabotage activities;
- informing and warning local authorities and the army about threats and enemy actions;
- evacuating the injured or injured and organizing help for them, including humanitarian aid.

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### Normative Acts

Article 16.1. Act of June 21, 2002 on the state of emergency (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 117, item 985, as amended).

Article 22. Act of 29 August 2002 on martial law and on the competences of the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and the principles of his subordination to the constitutional bodies of the Republic of Poland (Journal of Laws of 2002, No. 156, item 1301, as amended).

Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of April 2, 1997 (Journal of Laws of 1997, No. 78, item 483, as amended).