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2016

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Abstract:

Societal security is undoubtedly an instrument for creating populist attitudes. This is related primarily to the quality of different democratic mechanisms and their representations affecting the political system. However, in the largest extent the merge of societal security and populism are triggered by the political elite, and the recipients of their communication - the citizens. It is related to the belief, which is increasingly affecting the public that 'the elite should do what people order them to' (Markowski 2004: 14). Undoubtedly, this situation creates series of consequences related primarily to the lack of political and economic civic competences. On the other hand, it may contribute to the growth of citizens' dissatisfaction with the government actions that results in the loss of the legitimacy.

Key words:
social security, populist attitudes, populism

Societal and social security

In the modern world, security is one of the basic human needs. Among multiple hazards that may be considered as common ones, e.g. military or political, there are new, unconventional threats to the society. They are dangerous for the society because currently they are not fully identified and the ways of coping with them are not fully developed. These risks can be seen as social risks that threaten the existential basis of human beings. In the scientific approach the term societal security is used more and more commonly. It conveys any issues related to social risks. In literature there is also concept of social security, which by some scholars is considered to be the same as the concept of societal security.

However, the authors of this article would like to present separate approach to societal security and social security. What is more, they would like to present societal security as a notion broader in meaning than social security.

According to Marek Leszczyński, societal security is 'a range of legal and organizational actions implemented by government, non-governmental and international institutions, in order to ensure a certain standard of living of people and that they are not being marginalized and socially excluded' (Leszczyński 2011: 57). The author in his presentation of societal security adds that it is based on three pillars: common, developmental and social. However, the state through its actions is responsible for the social dimension. This situation may falsely indicate that it is the only institution with takes actions in the area of societal security. This needs to be strongly emphasized, that this narrow perception of the problem limits the development of the society. It is worth mentioning, that citizens play a very important role in shaping societal security. Thus, to achieve the goals of social responsibility the power should be divided to both the state and citizens. Otherwise, attitudes of helplessness and taking everything for granted may become strong or develop, and thus the lack of the ability to cope with difficult life situations, such as job loss, natural disaster, etc can be established. At the same time, the presence of 'life helplessness' can lead to the abuse of social welfare, and consequently (due to the excessive responsibilities) may lead to state withdrawal from the sphere of socially minded activities.

Boguslaw Jagusiak in his piece devoted to social security in the modern state repeats after Barbara Rysz – Kowalczyk a thesis that social security is a condition in which a particular individual or social group is free from the threat of deterioration of their living conditions. Social security has real guarantees that it meets the needs of individuals and their families, which are the basis of its existence. These guarantees are embodied in money or services for people. They protect against poverty or reduction in living standards caused mainly by social risks, fear of unemployment or a sharp decrease in the standard of living. When these factors occur, then an individual can receive financial aid (Jagusiak 2015: 34).

It can be said that social security is undoubtedly a narrower concept than societal security. Social security refers to risks associated with the lack of meeting the everyday needs of individuals and social groups. Consequently, it is only a part of the concept that forms the meaning of societal security, which consists of these three pillars. Without even one of them, we cannot discuss the implementation of societal security (Jagusiak 2015).

Undoubtedly, social security is an interdisciplinary concept, which combines elements of law, sociology and social work. Social security can be identified with social law. In the latter context, social security can apply to social standards that are guaranteed in the legal system of a democratic state. The basis

for this type of social considerations are human rights, e.g. the right to work or even the right for social security. Another aspect of the recognition of societal security are social needs which can be defined as safety of an individual or social group in this respect (Sierpowska 2015: 47).

Implementation by the state of the concept of social security as part of societal security, when relating to the financial aspects and meeting the minimum existential needs of the individual, is only a part of the way societal security is granted to a citizen. The simplest needs connected with social rights are only a first step to next stages of societal security. They are also a part of the aforementioned pillars related to the development of community. Undoubtedly, without them the society will never feel safe and secure. Furthermore, without the ability to meet the needs and calm the existential unrest, the citizen is not able to build a community, create a collaborative environment, and build relationships and standards necessary for the functioning of the society. In the absence of basic necessities a person has no possibility of self-development or self-improvement.

The literature often presents the concepts of societal security and social security as identical. However, as presented, these categories are different from each other. The different context of meaning of societal and social concepts should be emphasized. The term social security is in reference to the basic issues of living necessary for the functioning of the individual. The adjective 'societal' is a term with a wider meaning than social, which may relate to the functioning of the individual in the state, community, its development, as well as condition of their spirit and culture (Leszczyński 2011: 58).

Ensuring security in social area is undoubtedly a challenge for governments. However, without carrying out activities in this area, we cannot discuss the implementation of societal security because social area is its inseparable element. It is also worth mentioning that the sphere of social security is very often used in the electoral game, when political parties base their actions on the poll results during the election campaigns, and in the current government activities. Often decisions grow to certain paradigms which result in the development of populist attitudes of the ruling political party.

Populist attitudes

Populism is a heterogeneous category and the phenomenon occurring in many areas of social and political life. At the same time, elements constituting populism can be enumerated following Pierre-Andre Taguieff (2007: 40) who pointed to the mobilization of the dissatisfied, the charismatic leader (the occurrence of authoritarian, presidential and semi-presidential systems create favorable conditions), lack of a unified ideology (including appearance

of conservative and progressive attitudes), and the conviction that 'virtue is granted to simple people who are in the vast majority, and thus it is a collective tradition' (Wiles 2010: 25). It is worth mentioning, that in populism there is an idea of change in the sphere of social relations, although it is not necessarily synonymous with progress. Furthermore, the intervention of the state as an institution that solves the problems of 'common people' is undoubtedly needed.

Populism is a widespread phenomenon and is often confused with demagogy (Szacki 2007: 10; Karwat 2006: 225-230). This is mainly due to a rather thoughtlessly used concept of populism, used in many cases as an epithet, which in the colloquial usage that is employed mainly by the media to describe politicians, regardless of their party membership. The concept of populism has become a weapon against political opponents and is used to discredit them. It is worth mentioning that populism as a phenomenon occurring commonly: (Szacki 2007: 11) it 'goes more and more clearly from the periphery to the center of the modern world. The context in which today's populism is considered, is primarily in a political perspective of Western type democracy, however only in the nineties of the last century the West defined the problem of populism as its very own' (Szacki 2007: 12).

The question therefore arises, where essentially the contemporary populism bases its reasons, if it is not crystallized as ideology? Jerzy Szacki correctly notes that populism is not so much about specific ideas, values, or the institutionalization of the masses. Indeed, populism is a 'special understanding of democracy' (Szacki 2007: 14), which cannot be described by commonly known schemes. It is a very common phenomenon, but quite difficult to grasp, as it is not referring only to the manipulation used by politicians, but above all, it is an expression of discontent of the masses, which manifest it as they can – often in unprofessional and very emotional way. This is facilitated by the so-called: 'empty core', which indicates populists' lack of commitment to any values or ideas - which are chosen depending on the populists' needs. Therefore, it is easy to find populist attitudes among activists identifying themselves with great ideologies such as conservatism or liberalism. At the same time it should be noted that populism stems both from ideas of left and right political parties and is quite often placed against the main ideologies. This is complemented by 'native land' (heartland), which embodies traditions and wisdom of the people. It is not without significance that among the varieties of populism it is a fairly idealized structure within the community. One can even indicate that it is a special kind of founding myth favored in the statements and actions of politicians. Of course the 'native land' is inhabited by people and 'it gives meaning to all interpretations and appeals to people through the populist' (Taggart 2010: 84).

Both the 'empty core' and 'native land' are the elements used by populists in crises. It is worth mentioning, that the populists are generally against the political system, especially against its representative form and against engaging in politics. They consider the functioning of parties and parliament as revolting, since both institutions are an obstacle to the realization of populists' objectives. The paradox lies in the fact that this is the only way in which the populists can manifest their views.

Despite the negative attitude to politics and activities connected with it, there are situations in which populists engage in them. These are crises. It should be noted that it is very difficult to clearly determine which socio - political situations grow to the level of a crisis. Thus, the crisis could be the result of thinking about the crisis itself, and not the actual state of it. As noted by Paul Taggart, 'populism occurs when a major change process evokes a sense of crisis among at least one social group' (Taggart 2010: 80). At the same time, this social group can be described by a growing self-awareness and a sense of isolation from the centers of power.

It is worth emphasizing that these are usually groups with low social competence of economic and civic nature. They are fostered mainly by anti-intellectualism and populism mentioned before referring to the category of 'people' and traditions that constitute it. There is also a belief that anti-intellectualism has to fulfill another important task: that it is a negation, an escape from everything that symbolizes the elite of a particular society. It is therefore the basis for the construction of the 'new order'.

Populism is a substitute for a category and is often used as an epithet also because it cannot be classified and presented in the perspective of well-known ideological models or patterns associated with such ideological divisions, as well as the standards of thinking that dominated the West at the turn of the century. It is also 'a strategy of dealing with the public and as such can undoubtedly be used as the realization of very diverse interests and objectives. Therefore, populism understood in this particular way has a primarily instrumental dimension' (Dzwończyk 2000: 18).

Social security and populist attitudes

Populism is often a crucial instrument that utilizes slogans, and it often points to the development of social security. This is strongly noticeable especially during the election campaigns. This point is also very important as the social security has a great impact on the sphere of economic voting. As described, 'the theory of economic voting was created as a tool for describing the mechanism by which the economic situation, monitored by

economic indicators, is reflected in the assessment of those who are responsible for the economy - the ones wielding the power' (Markowski, Cześnik, Kotnarowski 2015: 120). However, assuming that this theory is valid it should also be pointed out that the decisions of the elite on economic issues are felt by the society in general in the long term. Therefore, often the effects are not connected directly with the government of the day and the outcome of the decisions can be seen in the next few years (Turska-Kawa 2015: 234).

At the same time economic problems, by some neglected and marginalized, and by the others used as an important element of manipulation during election campaigns, to a large extent determine the quality of societal security – apart from its development and communal sphere. These economic problems significantly affect the social sphere under the responsibility of the state. Thus, risky thesis (quite trivial) can be formulated that the higher election promises on social sphere of societal security, the greater the probability of winning the election. However, this claim (and sometimes conviction) may entail some problems.

First of all, this is because the economic vote is considered as a manifestation of rational electoral behavior, which means that the voter has some knowledge of economics that allows them to accurately assess the state of the economy versus the promises made during the election. This assumption is a quite optimistic perception of citizens' competence in terms of economic issues, because, as correctly observed by Agnieszka Turska-Kawa 'economic issues are difficult to assess objectively - their understanding and relationship with other notions of the social functioning of the individuals require a specific level of competence, knowledge and discernment of socio-economic reality' (Turska-Kawa 2015: 212).

At the same time, it is assumed that voters do not succumb to their whims, are convinced of their economic choices and are not influenced by the discrediting voices that present lack of achievements of the current government with regards to the wider economy. As rightly pointed by Radoslaw Markowski, Mikołaj Cześnik and Michał Kotnarowski this theory is an ideal version of the economic choice, which can be verified by the empirical research. The authors point to the fact that 'citizens may mistakenly perceive the results of policies and /or may not be able to correctly describe the political responsibility. Incompetent, indecisive or simply poorly informed voters can unjustly punish politicians and parties' (Markowski, Cześnik, Kotnarowski 2015: 120). As a result, on the one hand citizens' economic aspirations are underestimated by the government and on the other hand 'instead of a qualitative exchange of the information between the elites and the masses more often one can see the adaptation of politicians to the superficial whims of voters' (Markowski, Cześnik, Kotnarowski 2015). It is difficult to not to classify the situation as favorable to shaping and strengthening of the populist attitudes.

It can be said that, owing to this situation, societal security is oversimplified, reduced to the promise that people's wish list will be executed by politicians. The voters' evaluation of government performance requires first and foremost from the 'citizens the ability to understand correctly the economic indicators and to reach the most appropriate and reliable sources of knowledge about the country's economy' (Markowski, Cześnik, Kotnarowski 2015: 121). This in turn requires a developed social capital that is built on an involvement (chain link), social trust and norms (especially the norm of reciprocity) (Putnam 2008: 25-27). However, the presence of these values in a society contributes to the weakening of the 'power' of populist slogans, which undoubtedly can affect elections and governing results. Therefore, it is easier to refer to a fragment of societal security within its social sphere. However, as shown by the experience of different political groups (e.g. Self-defense Party in Poland) this could be the beginning of the end for the winners of a particular election. When people are not satisfied with the electoral promises and are poorly educated in the field of economics they will appraise the ruling party by what they have accomplished and not what was planned to be achieved.

The focus on social issues during an election campaign, which can be seen as the equivalent of societal security, is a factor that may stimulate the development of social trust, or on the contrary, reinforce a culture of distrust in the society. What would be the possible outcome of this situation? Social culture of mistrust does not have to be an element negatively affecting the quality of societal security, and at the same time affecting the level of consolidation of democracy and the development of populist attitudes. On the contrary, it may have a positive impact on the abovementioned phenomena. Therefore, the focus of the election parties only on social issues (taken from the whole package of societal security) can also have a positive impact on these phenomena.

Contrary to the opinions emerging especially in Poland, social mistrust has been a determinant of social development in two dimensions: the liberal and democratic (after Rosanvallon 2011:13). Liberal distrust is aimed primarily, as indicated by Pierre Rosanvallon, at preventing the accumulation of power by 'the establishment of the weak power and institutionalization of suspicion' (Rosanvallon 2011: 10). Thus, the liberal distrust is to be used in the process of shaping weak power, so that it would not even be in position to evolve into the authoritarian power. The consequence of this kind of social mistrust was the Montesquieu's thesis of the separation of powers (Montesquieu 2003: IV). Thus, in this case the suspicion is primarily based on the distance from the power, even towards the one that was chosen by universal suffrage, as 'the will of the people.'

However, for this dissertation the second kind of mistrust – democratic distrust, which 'essence is to ensure that elected government abide by its commitments, and finding funds to keep the primary requirements which are connected with the service of the common good' (Rosanvallon 2011: 9) is of bigger importance. Fulfullment of commitments can be supported in a variety of ways - e.g.: through social supervision of the authority or additional obstacles e.g. strikes and protests, and finally by involving the judiciary if needed. This form of social distrust is defined as a new type of democracy – anti-democracy that takes the form of organized distrust (Rosanvallon 2011).

For some political scientists, for example for quoted earlier P. Rosanvallon or Ivan Krastev, the culture of distrust is the basis for the modern democracy. This situation is a consequence of the erosion of three dimensions of the social and individual activities in scientific, economic and sociological spheres. The complexity of these areas of activity (as already mentioned earlier) causes lowering of social trust, but at the same time also contributes to reducing its importance for the society and for the individual. Therefore, people begin to live and work in a culture of social distrust. This paradoxically contributes to the development of democracy or according to Rosanvallon - anti-democracy. However, to actually see the proper form of anti-democracy, namely the suspicion of citizens, it should grow into participation understood not only in traditional but also unconventional way, which is quite often overlooked when analyzing the various forms of citizen participation. It is worth noting, that around the world and also in Poland there is a growing reluctance to participate in the elections, and at the same time people strive to participate in such democratic forms of interaction as strikes, protests and petitions. Therefore, the importance of social mistrust should be essentially sought just in these forms of participation.

It becomes hard not to admit the correctness of the thesis 'that passive citizen is a mythical creature' and 'on the one hand the electoral democracy is undoubtedly eroded, on the other hand, democracies rich in expression, implications and interventions developed and strengthened' (Rosanvallon 2011: 19).

These considerations allow for a formulation of following conclusions. Firstly, social security, which should be implemented by the state, is often used in the electoral game. It is often restricted to the sphere of promises in the election campaigns, often with no real coverage of the financial possibilities of the state (for example one can look to the fulfilled promise of the Law and Justice party to grant additional money for families known as 500+ program). It is, however, consistent with the 'will of the people', as the means of populist attitudes. On the other hand, the use of populist elements in the electoral game in the long run may prove to be a disaster for the government. First of all, while 'fulfilling citizens' cravings' the government may end up being unable to handle

the costs of the election promises in the social sphere. This undoubtedly carries a threat to the stability of the system, not only in political, but also economic respect. As a consequence, it can lead to an escalation of citizens' demands in relation to a ruling and to the development of anti-democracy, which is undoubtedly the "explosion" of civic attitudes.

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