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Terrorism in Poland and trends in its development. Survey results (summary report)

On 26 April 2022, the first survey on the perception of the phenomenon of terrorism and the anticipated, most likely trends in the development of terrorist threats in our country was conducted among the participants of the inaugural meeting of the new scientific periodical “Terrorism - studies, analyses, prevention” published by the Internal Security Agency.

The respondents were representatives of the academic and analytical community involved in terrorism studies and representatives of services and institutions belonging to the anti-terrorist community of Poland. The survey was anonymous, with 94 respondents, including 71 representatives of the state administration, 21 representatives of the academic community and 2 analysts cooperating with research centres.

The paper questionnaire consisted of 11 questions - 5 semiopen questions (questions: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6), 2 closed questions (questions: 7, 8) and 4 multiple-choice questions (questions: 4, 9, 10, 11). In the multiple-choice questions, respondents were asked to rank their answers according to a 4-point or 5-point scale given in the instructions to the question each time.

The results obtained were statistically analysed and then presented as figures. The numbers in the figures have been rounded to two digits after the decimal point.

Key findings from the results of the survey:

- 62,76% of respondents consider ISIS (DAESH) as the organisation posing the greatest threat to the security of EU countries, Al-Qa'ida came second with 15,96% of the votes, the Russian special services were mentioned in third place with 11,70% of the votes.
- 61,70% of respondents consider ISIS (DAESH) as the organisation posing the greatest threat to the security of eastern EU countries, the Russian special services came second with 17,02% of the votes, Al-Qa'ida was mentioned in third place with 9,57% of the votes.
- 53,19% of respondents consider ISIS (DAESH) to be the organisation posing the greatest threat to the security of the Republic of Poland, the special services of the Russian Federation ranked second with a score of 17,02% of votes, Atomwaffen was mentioned in third place with a score of 14,89% of votes.
- Among the types of facilities that remain of interest to terrorists planning their activities within the EU, respondents listed the following locations in the top three:
 - critical infrastructure facilities (39,36% of votes),
 - public open spaces (32,98% of the votes),
 - tourist infrastructure and sports facilities (14,89% of the votes).
- Among the technologies currently posing the greatest challenge to the services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the ICT security of services, devices or facilities that could be the target of terrorist attacks in cyberspace, respondents listed in the top three:
 - highly advanced automation technology for control processes (35,11% of votes),
 - artificial intelligence (26,60% of votes),
 - cloud-based data storage (22,34% of votes).
- Among the tools, devices or technologies that are currently the greatest challenge for services, authorities and institutions to ensure the physical security of people and objects that could be targeted by terrorist attacks, respondents listed in the top three:
 - unmanned aerial vehicles (69,15% of votes),
 - improvised explosive devices (10,64% of the votes),
 - 3D printing (8,51% of the votes).
- 47,87% of respondents thought that in a three-year perspective Poland would be an attractive country for international terrorists

planning their activities in the EU, with 19% of respondents holding the opposite view.

- 90,43% of respondents considered that terrorist activity carried out as part of hybrid activities undertaken on the territory of Poland by a foreign state should be expected in the three-year perspective.
- Among the facilities located in the Republic of Poland whose level of threat of a terrorist attack in a three-year horizon is rated as the highest by respondents, the top three were:
 - critical energy infrastructure facilities (36,17% of votes),
 - public transport system (34,04% of votes),
 - military bases used as part of NATO's eastern flank (19,15% of votes).
- Among the terrorism research topics that should be given the highest priority, respondents listed the following areas in the top three:
 - the process of radicalisation leading to terrorism (30,85% of votes),
 - detection and blocking of terrorist propaganda (23,40% of votes),
 - countering the financing of terrorism (19,15% of votes).
- Among initiatives that build anti-terrorism cooperation between academia and government institutions and services, respondents listed the following proposals in the top three:
 - joint research and development projects (45,74% of votes),
 - creation of formalised forums for the exchange of knowledge and experience (39,36% of votes),
 - publication of joint guides on security education (2,77% of votes).

Statistical elaboration

Breakdown of survey respondents by the community they represent:

- 22% - representative of the academic community,
- 76% - representatives of state administration,
- 2% - analysts cooperating with a research centre.

Question 1. Which terrorist organisation poses the greatest threat to the security of the countries of the European Union? (choose one answer)

- a. Al-Qa'ida,
- b. ISIS,
- c. Hezbollah,
- d. Atomwaffen,
- e. Other.

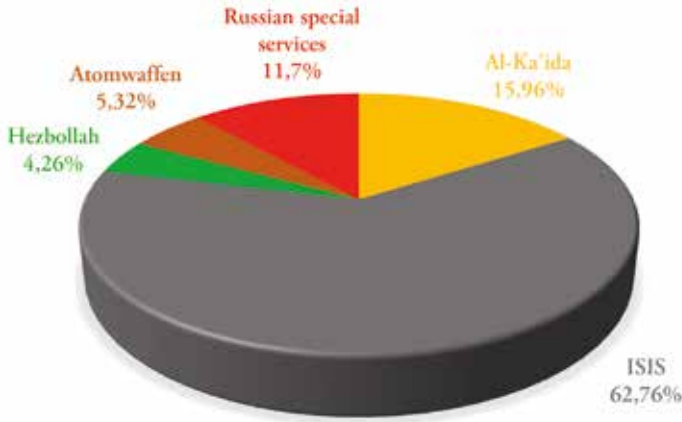


Figure 1. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest threat to the security of EU countries.

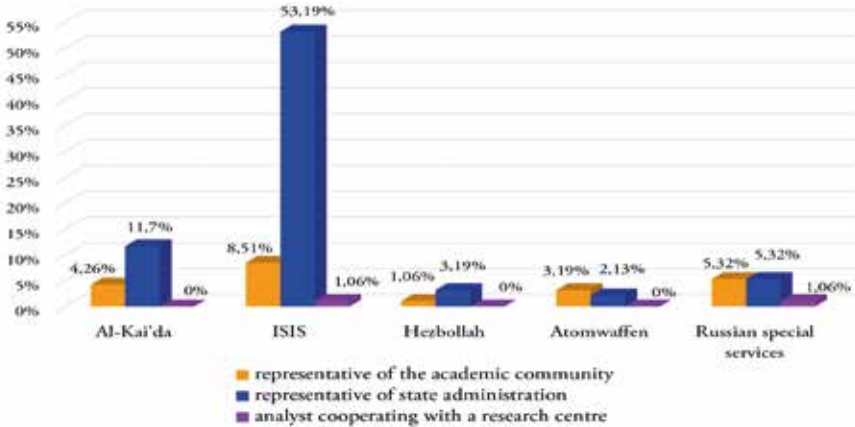


Figure 1a. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest threat to the security of EU countries - distribution of responses according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 2. Which terrorist organisation poses the greatest security threat to the eastern part of the European Union? (choose one answer)

- a. Al-Qa'ida,
- b. ISIS,
- c. Hezbollah,
- d. Atomwaffen,
- e. Other.

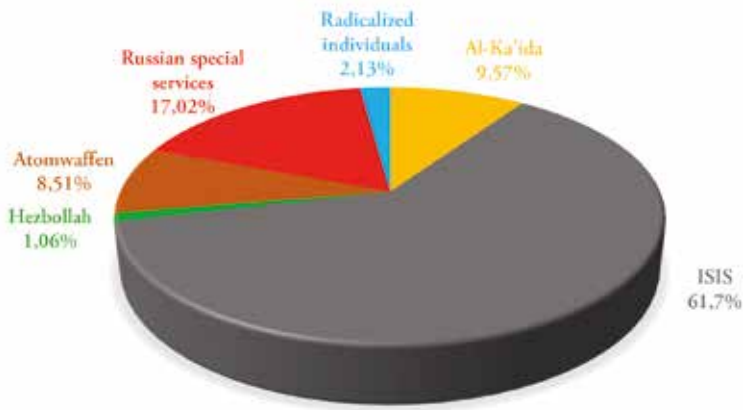


Figure 2. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest security threat to the eastern part of the EU.

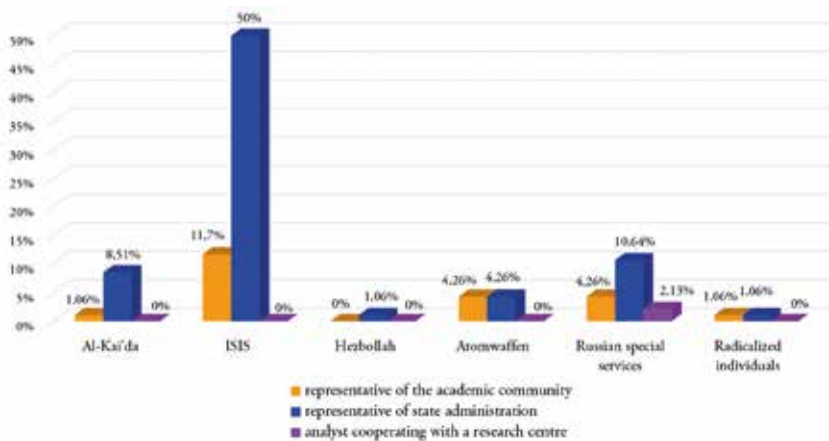


Figure 2a. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest threat to the security of the eastern part of the EU - distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 3. Which terrorist organisation poses the greatest threat to the security of the Republic of Poland? (choose one answer)

- a. Al-Qa'ida,
- b. ISIS,
- c. Hezbollah,
- d. Atomwaffen,
- e. Other.

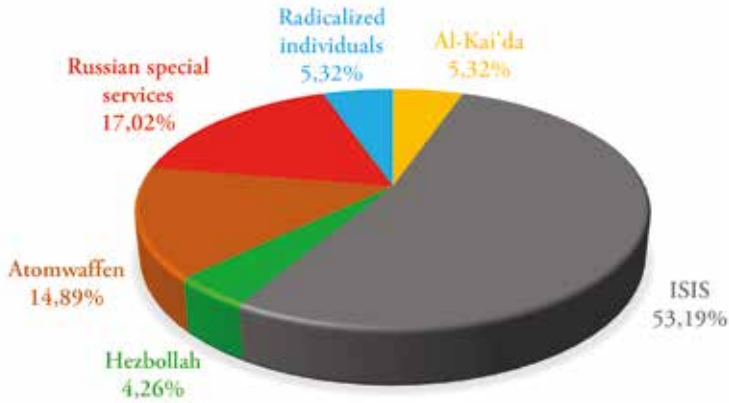


Figure 3. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest threat to Poland's security.

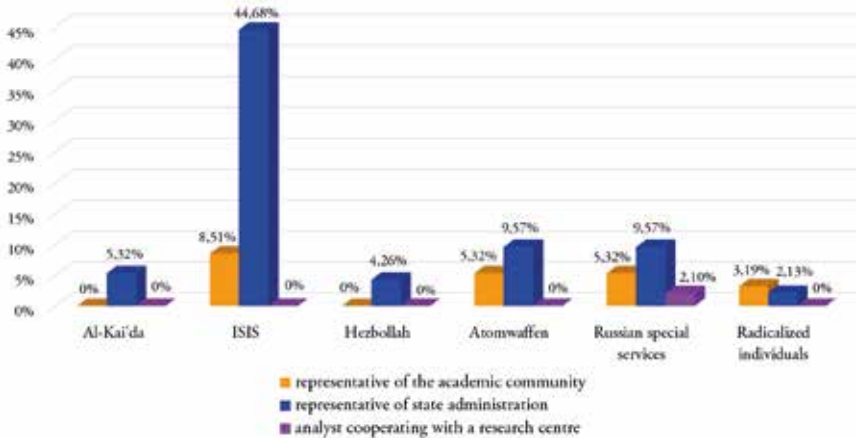


Figure 3a. Terrorist organisations posing the greatest threat to the security of the Republic of Poland - distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 4. What sites are of interest to terrorists planning their activities within the European Union today? (rank on the right hand side from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating the greatest level of interest)

- a. Government office buildings,
- b. Critical infrastructure facilities,
- c. Public open spaces,
- d. Military bases,
- e. Tourism infrastructure and sports facilities.

Facilities marked with number 1

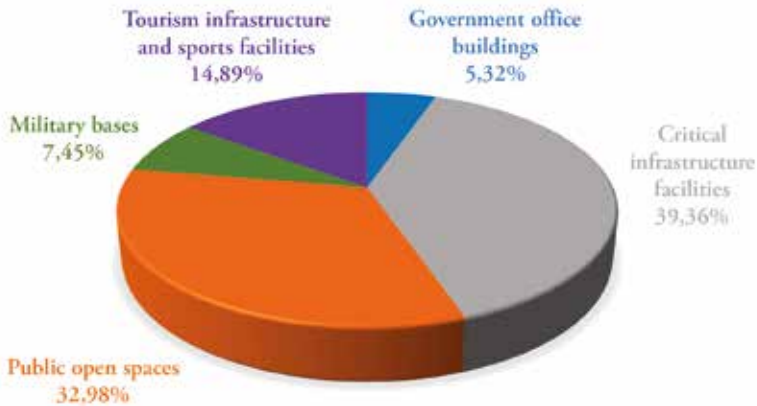


Figure 4. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with 1 (highest level of interest).

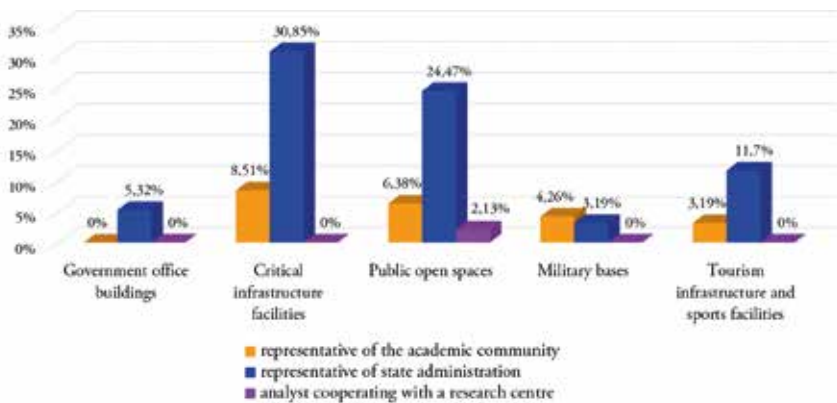


Figure 4a. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 1 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 2

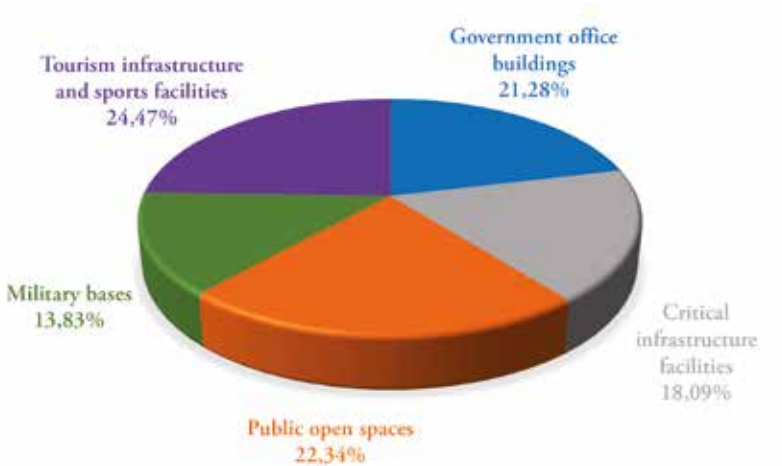


Figure 4b. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 2.

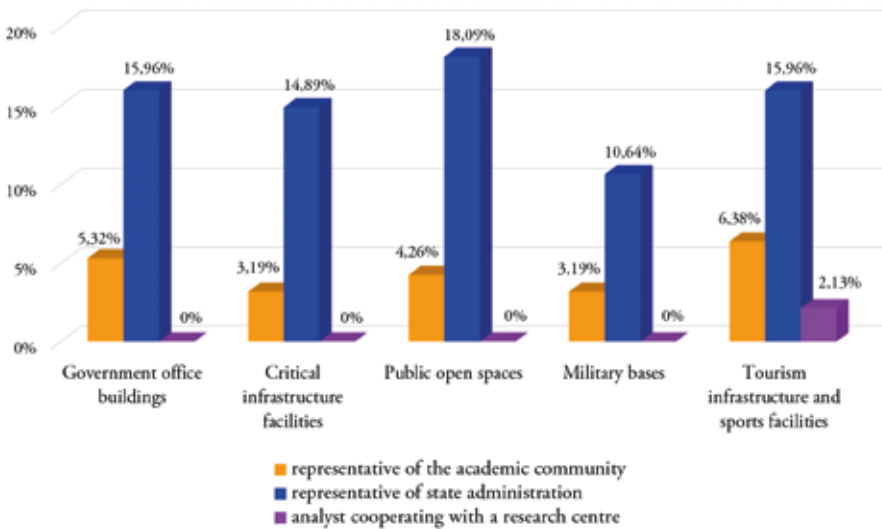


Figure 4c. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 2 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 3

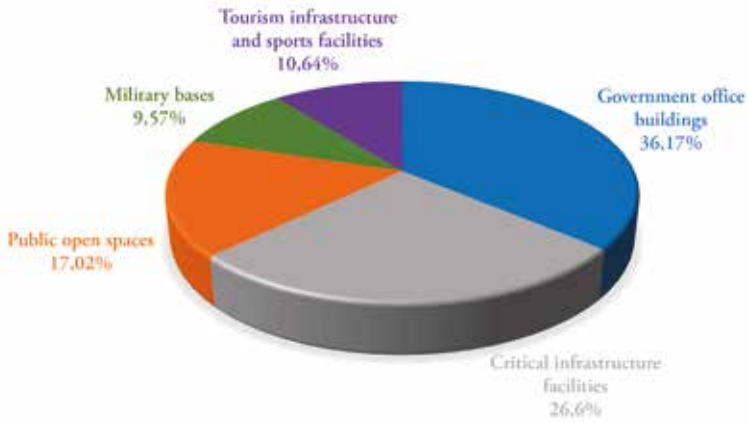


Figure 4d. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 3.

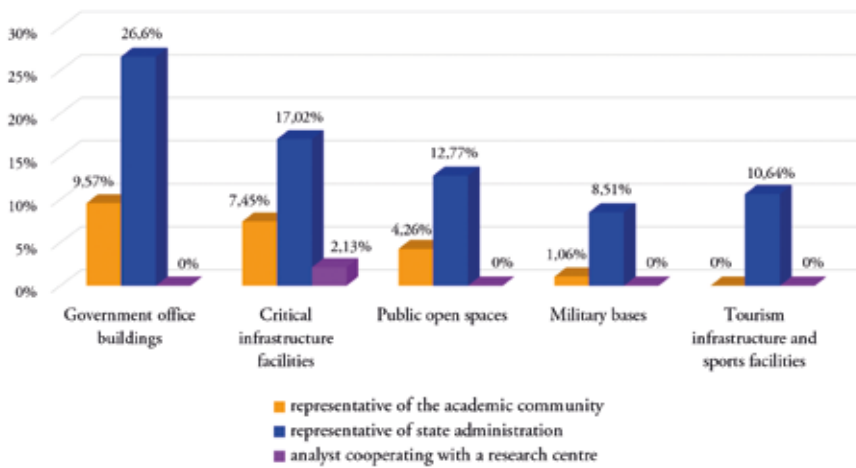


Figure 4e. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 3 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 4

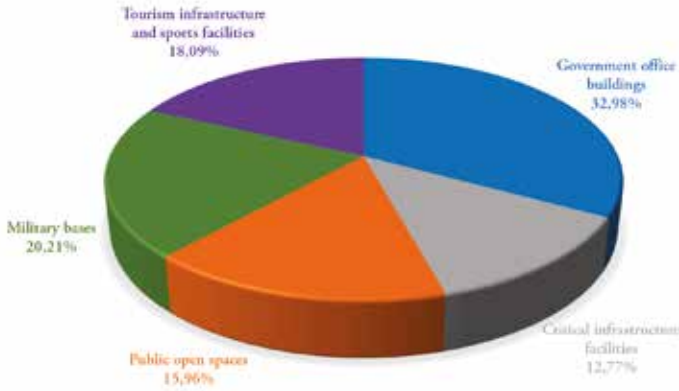


Figure 4f. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 4.

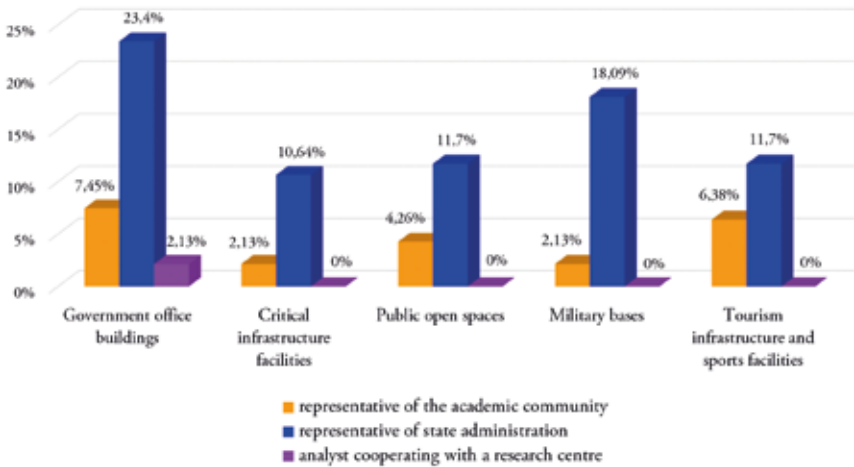


Figure 4g. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 4 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 5

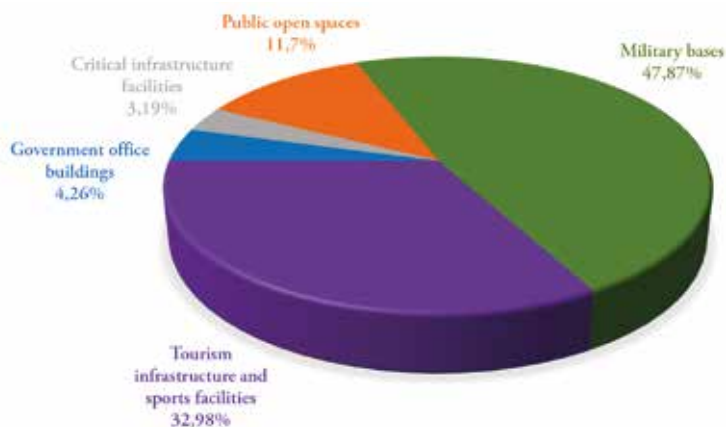


Figure 4h. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 5.

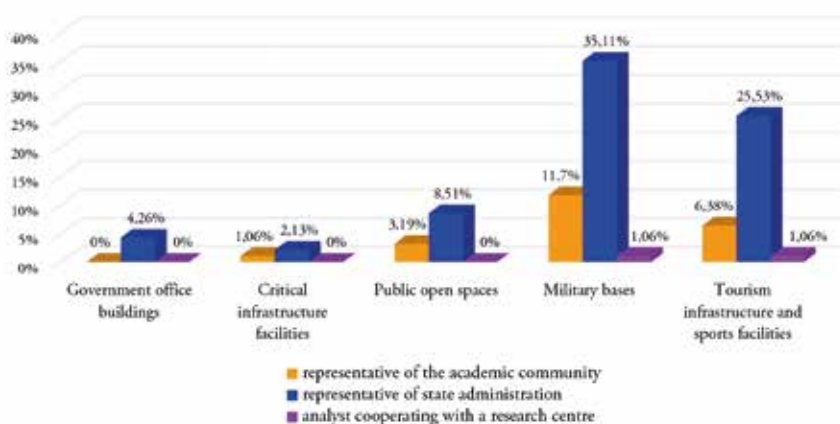


Figure 4i. Proportion of each type of site of interest to terrorists planning their activities in the EU, in the group of sites marked with the number 5 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 5. What technologies are today’s biggest challenges for services, authorities and institutions to ensure the ICT security of services, devices or facilities that could be targeted by terrorist attacks in cyberspace? (choose one answer)

- a. Artificial intelligence,
- b. Cloud-based data storage,
- c. Highly advanced automation technology for control processes,
- d. Development of 5G data transmission standards,
- e. Other.

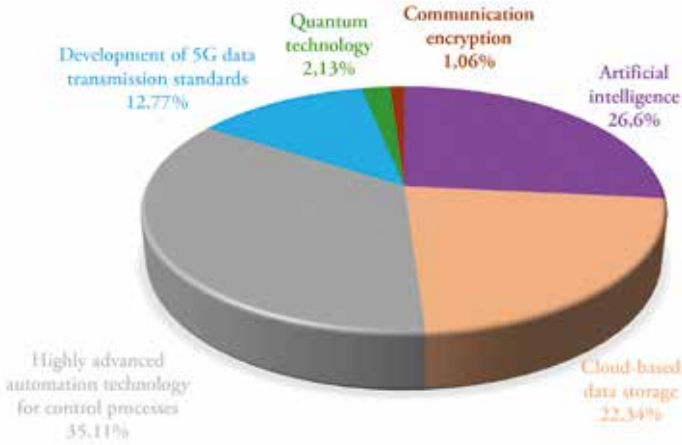


Figure 5. Technologies that pose the greatest challenge today for services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the ICT security of services, devices or facilities that could be targeted by terrorist attacks in cyberspace.

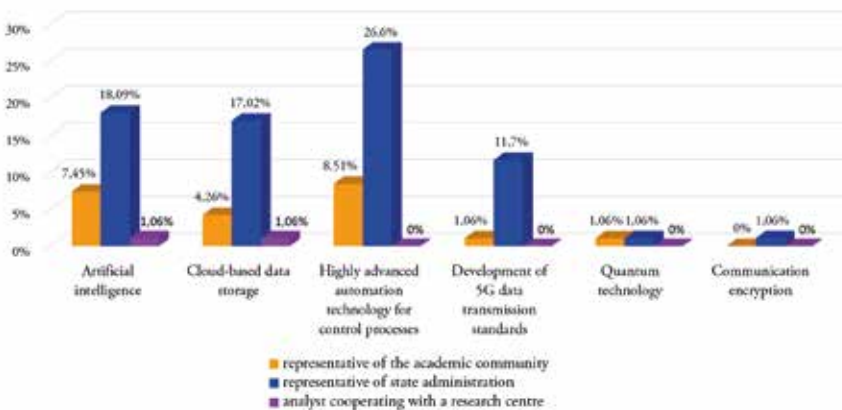


Figure 5a. Technologies that pose the greatest challenge today for services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the ICT security of services, devices or facilities that could be targeted by terrorist attacks in cyberspace – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 6. What are the most challenging tools, devices or technologies today for the services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the physical security of persons and facilities that may be targeted by terrorists? (choose one answer)

- a. Unmanned aerial vehicles,
- b. 3D printing,
- c. Vehicles as weapons,
- d. Improvised explosive devices,
- e. Cold steel weapons made of composites,
- f. Other.

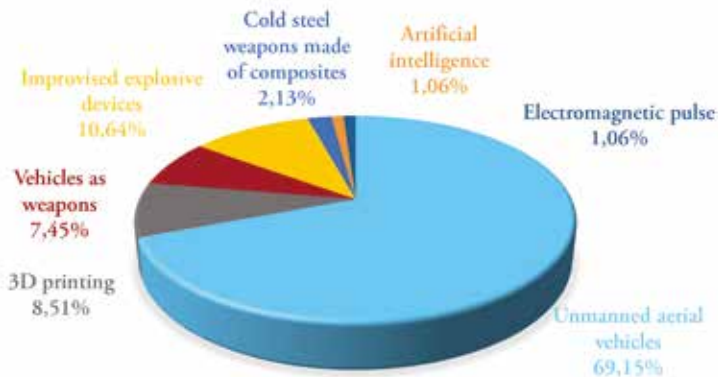


Figure 6. Tools, devices or technologies that pose the greatest challenge today to the services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the physical security of persons and objects that could be the target of terrorist attacks.

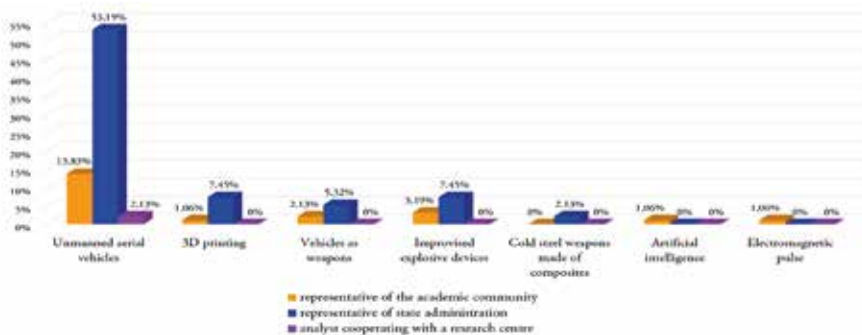


Figure 6a. Tools, devices or technologies that pose the greatest challenge today to the services, authorities and institutions tasked with ensuring the physical security of persons and objects that could be the target of terrorist attacks – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 7. In a 3-year perspective, will Poland be an unattractive country for international terrorists? (choose one answer)

- a. Yes,
- b. No,
- c. Difficult to say.

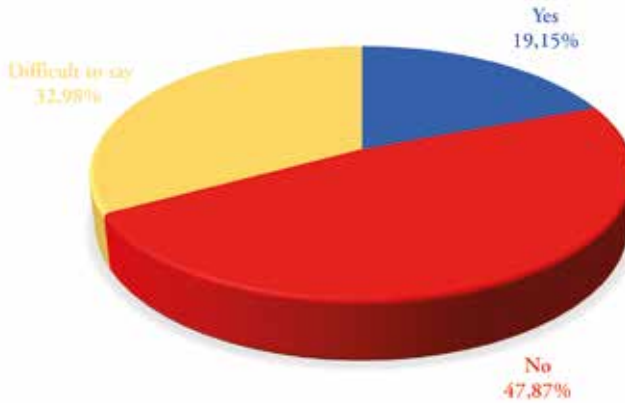


Figure 7. Poland as an unattractive country for international terrorists in the next 3 years.

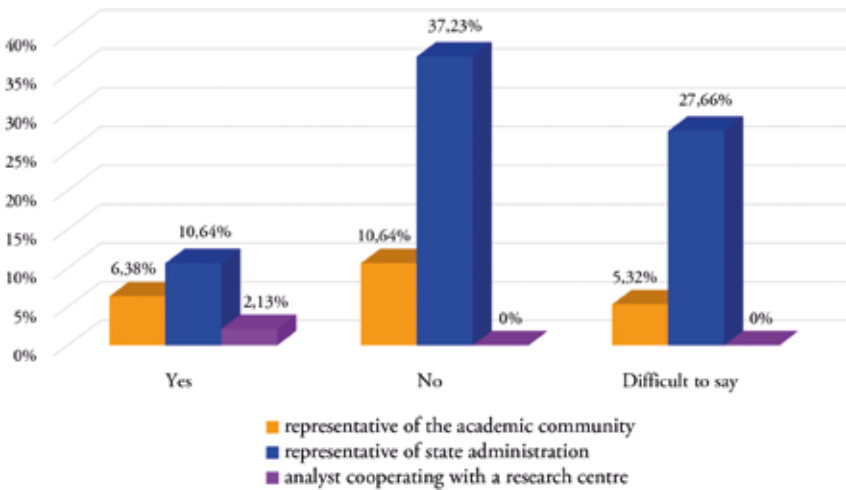


Figure 7a. Poland as an unattractive country for international terrorists in the next 3 years – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 8. In a 3-year horizon, should we expect to see the use of terrorist activity as part of hybrid activities undertaken on Polish territory by a foreign state? (choose one answer)

- a. Yes,
- b. No,
- c. Difficult to say.

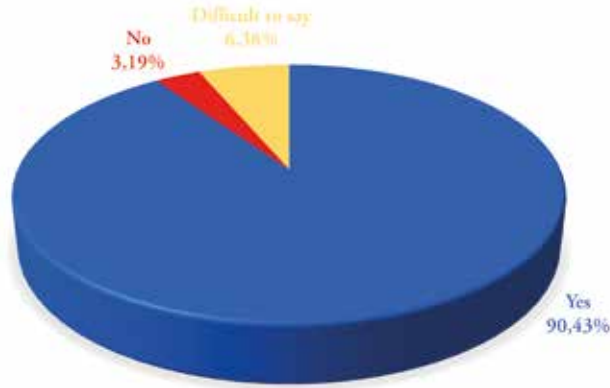


Figure 8. The likelihood of terrorist activity being used as part of hybrid activities undertaken by a foreign state on Polish territory in the next 3 years.

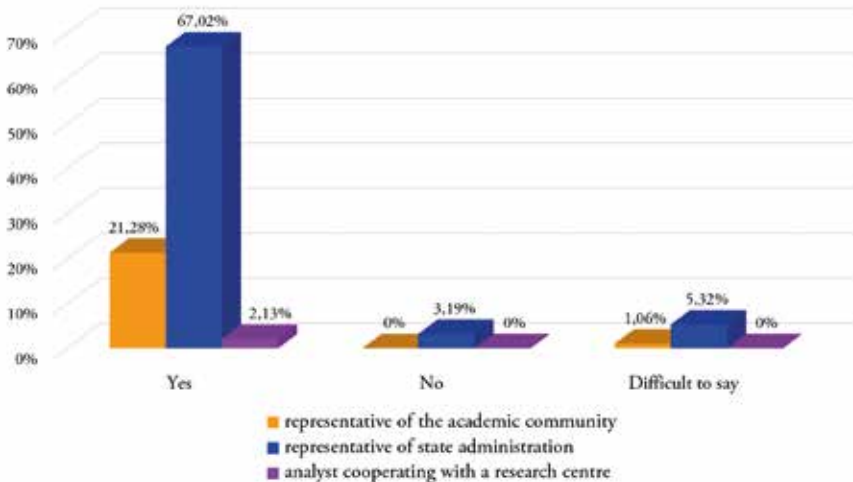


Figure 8a. The likelihood of terrorist activity being used as part of hybrid activities undertaken by a foreign state on Polish territory in the next 3 years – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 9. In a 3-year perspective, how will the level of threat of a terrorist attack on the indicated sites in Poland evolve? (rank on the right hand side from 1 to 5, with 1 indicating the greatest level of threat)

- a. Military bases used as part of NATO’s eastern flank,
- b. Critical energy infrastructure facilities,
- c. Public transport system,
- d. Seats of constitutional state bodies,
- e. Tourism infrastructure and sports facilities.

Facilities marked with number 1

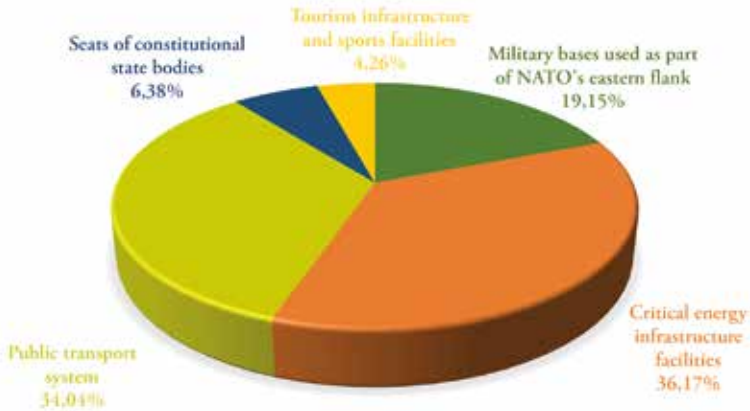


Figure 9. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 1 (highest level of threat).

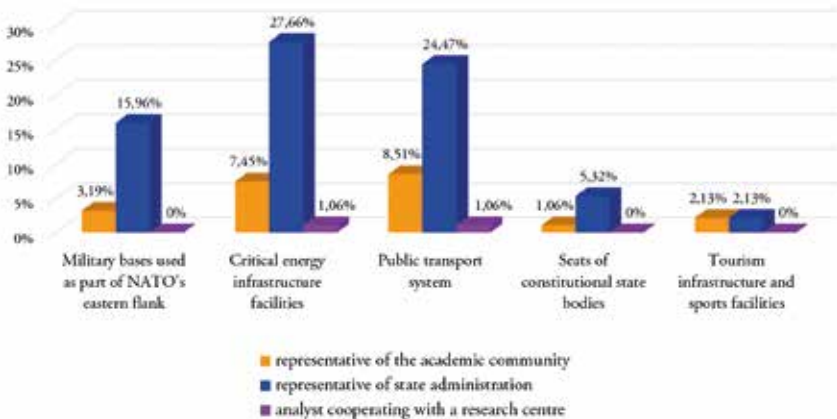


Figure 9a. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 1 (highest level of threat) – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 2

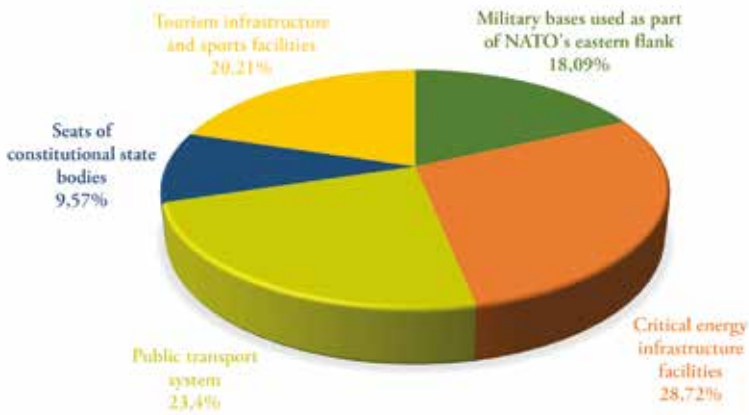


Figure 9b. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 2.

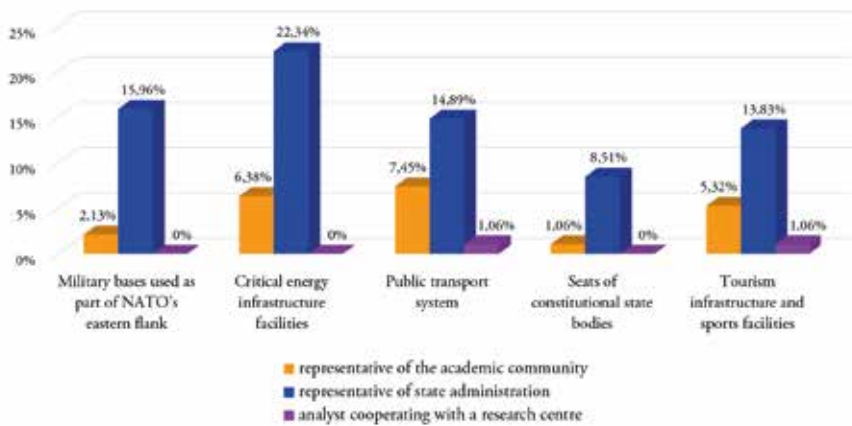


Figure 9c. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 2 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 3

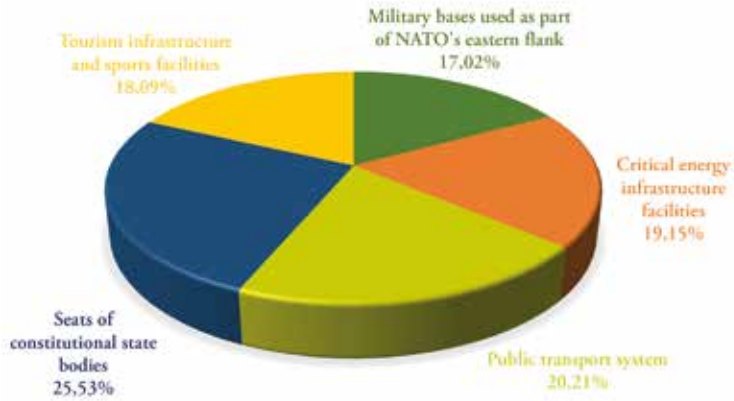


Figure 9d. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 3.

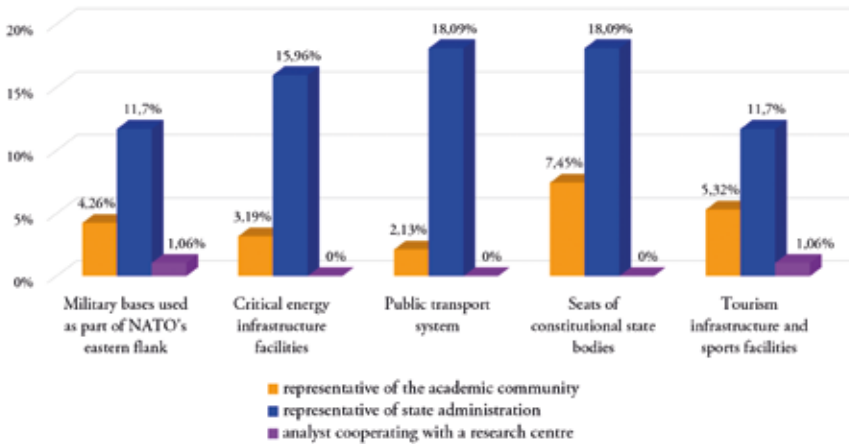


Figure 9e. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 3 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 4

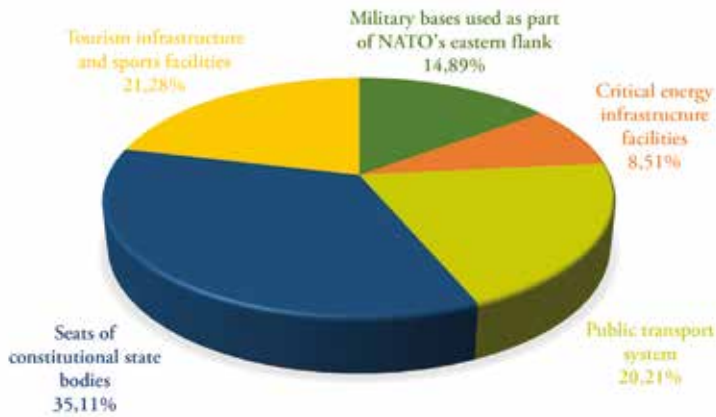


Figure 9f. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 4.

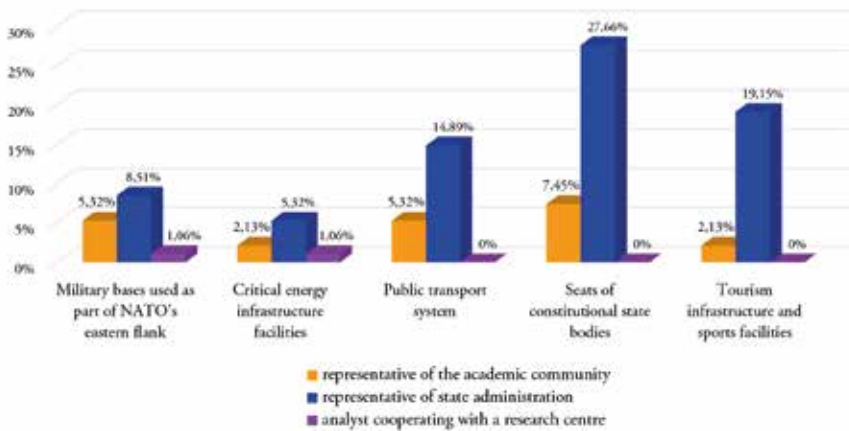


Figure 9g. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 4 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Facilities marked with number 5

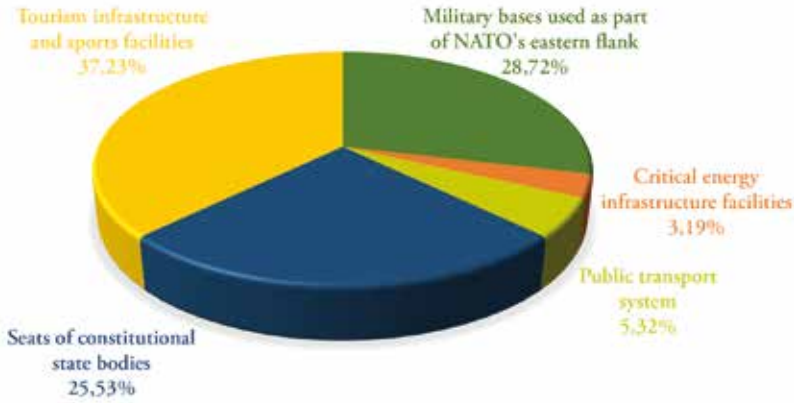


Figure 9h. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 5.

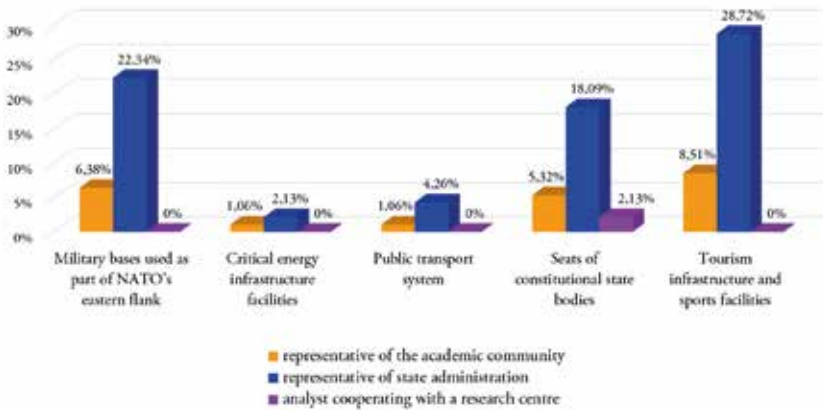


Figure 9i. Share of each type of facility in the Republic of Poland at risk of a terrorist attack in the next 3 years in the group of facilities marked with the number 5 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 10. How should the topics of terrorism research be prioritised in Poland? (rank on the right hand side from 1 to 5, with 1 being the highest priority)

- a. The process of radicalisation to terrorism,
- b. Countering recruitment to terrorism,
- c. Detection and blocking of terrorist propaganda,
- d. Detection technologies for devices used to carry out terrorist attacks,
- e. Countering the financing of terrorism.

Research topics marked with number 1

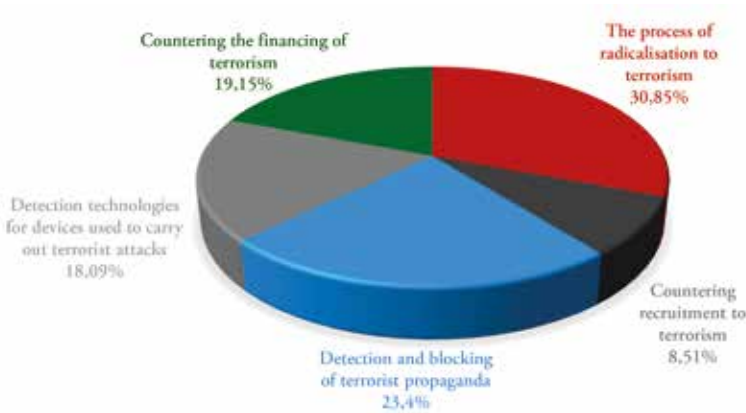


Figure 10. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 1 (highest priority).

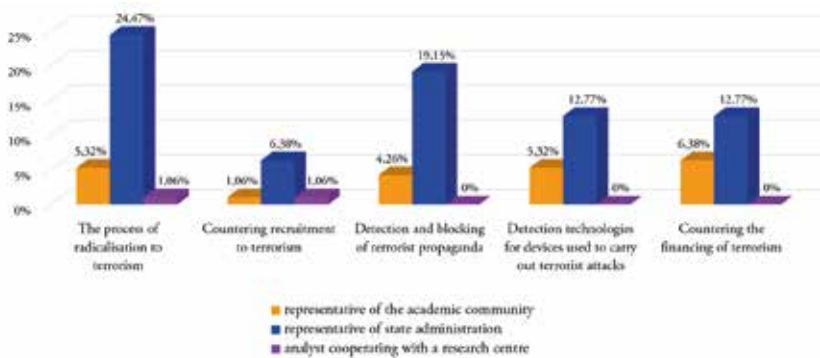


Figure 10a. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 1 (highest priority) – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Research topics marked with number 2

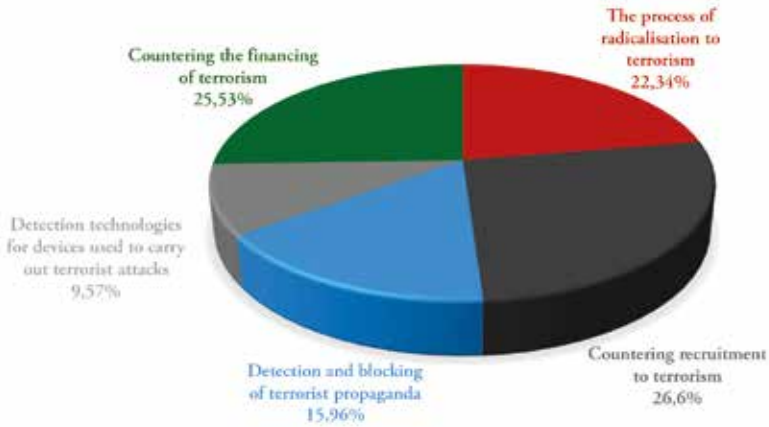


Figure 10b. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 2.

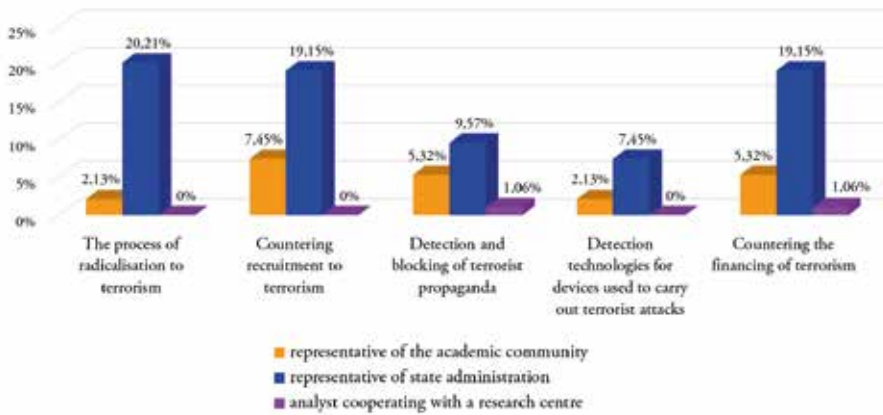


Figure 10c. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 2 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Research topics marked with number 3

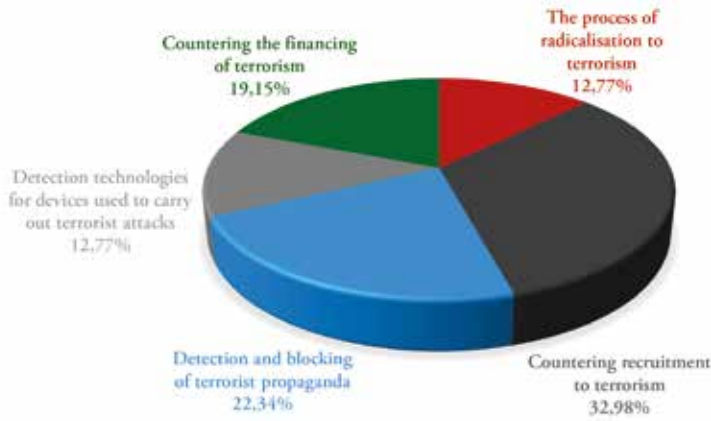


Figure 10d. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 3.

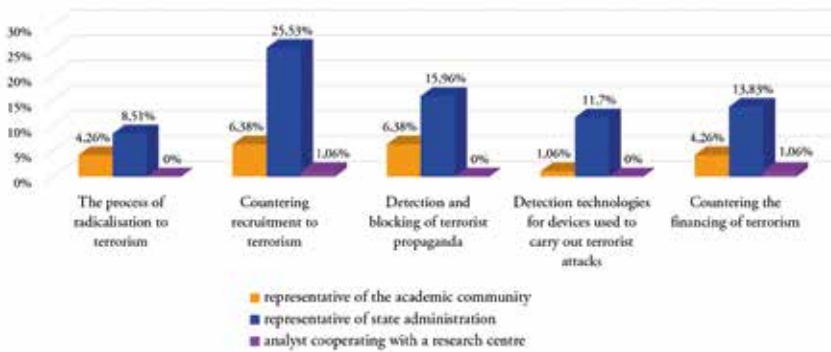


Figure 10e. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 3 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Research topics marked with number 4

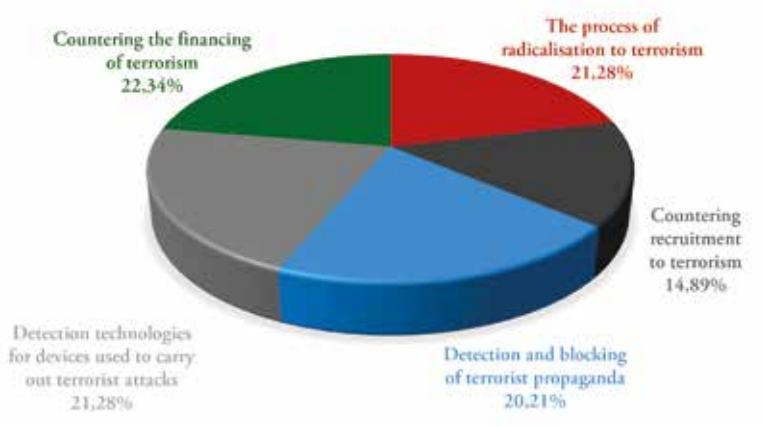


Figure 10f. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 4.

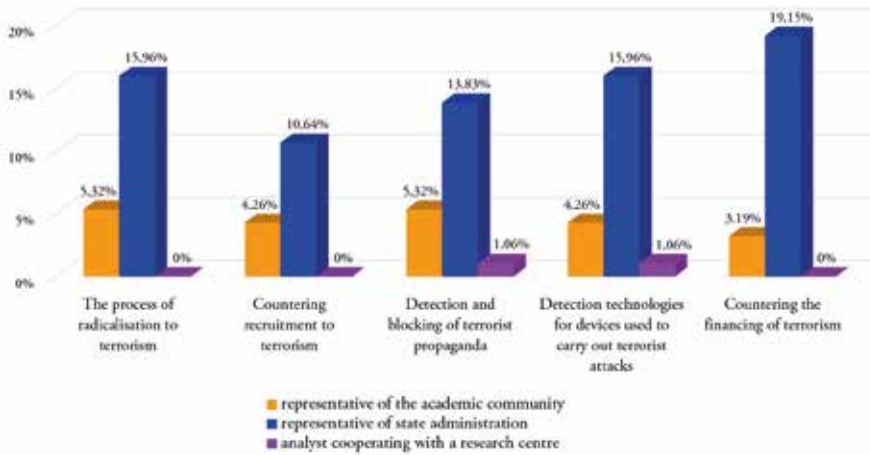


Figure 10g. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 4 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Research topics marked with number 5

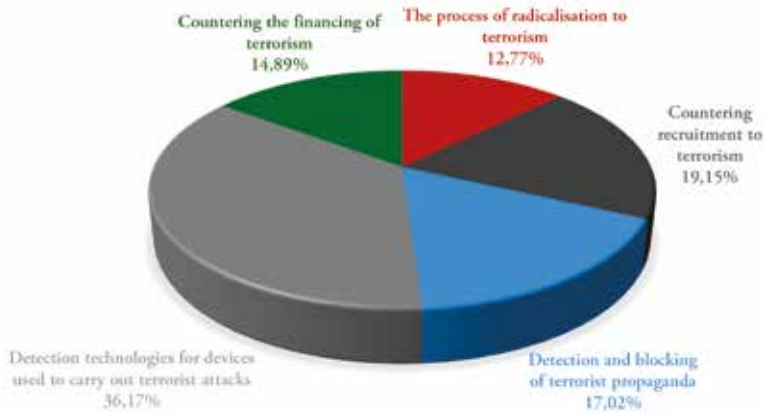


Figure 10h. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 5.

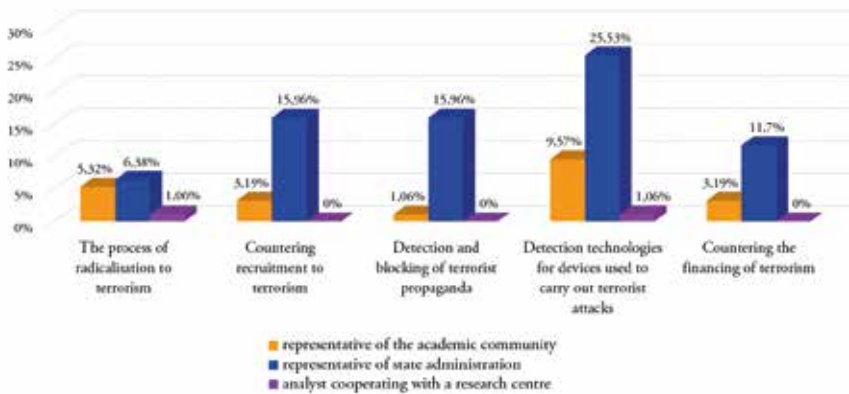


Figure 10i. Share of individual terrorism research topics among those marked with number 5 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Question 11. Which initiatives that build anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services should be particularly developed? (rank on the right hand side from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most important initiative)

- a. Patronage of university conferences,
- b. Creation of formalised forums for the exchange of knowledge and experience,
- c. Joint research and development projects,
- d. Publication of joint guides on security education.

Initiatives marked with number 1

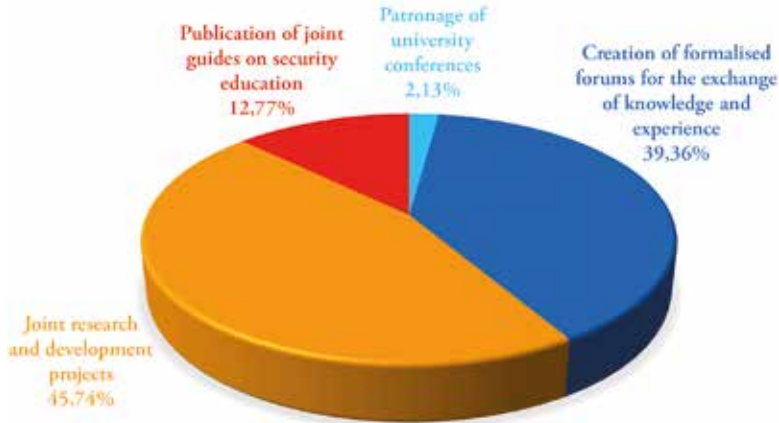


Figure 11. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 1 (the most important initiative).

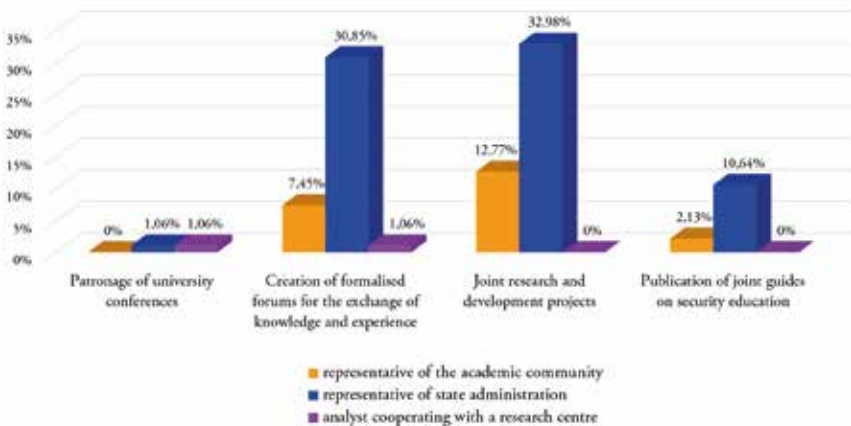


Figure 11a. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 1 (the most important initiative) – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Initiatives marked with number 2

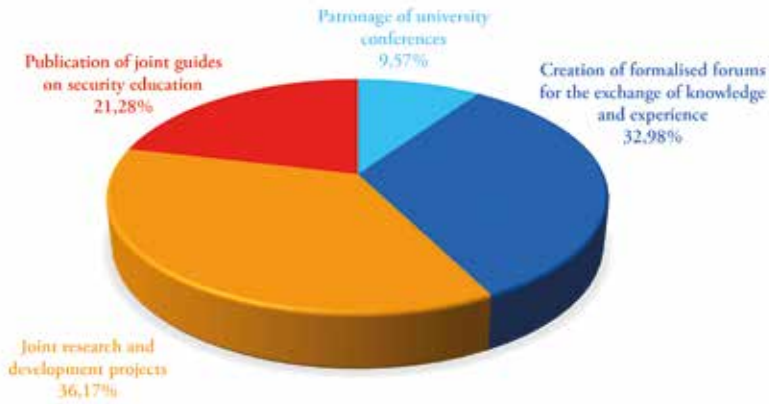


Figure 11b. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 2.

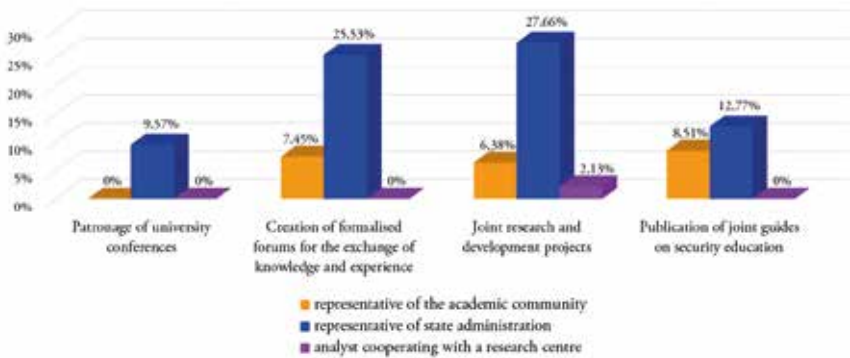


Figure 11c. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 2 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Initiatives marked with number 3

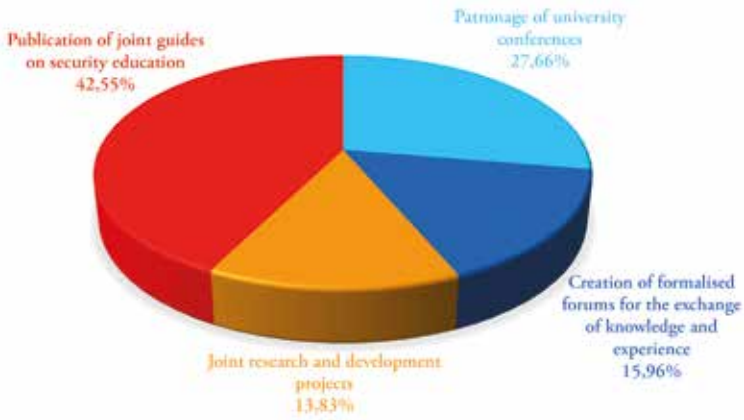


Figure 11d. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 3.

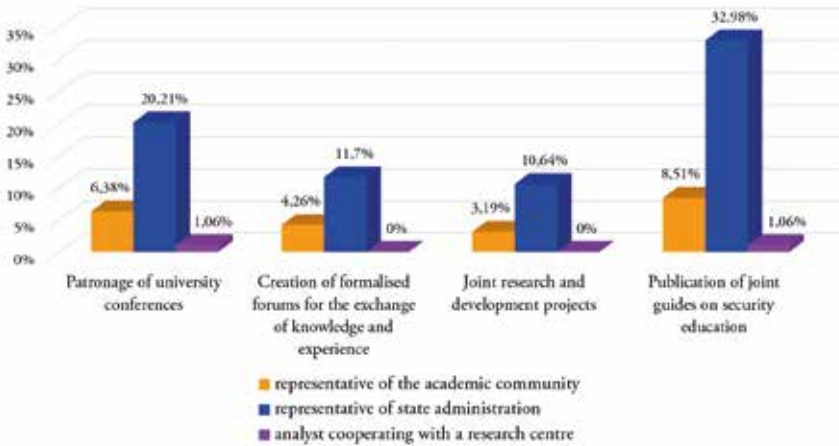


Figure 11e. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 3 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.

Initiatives marked with number 4

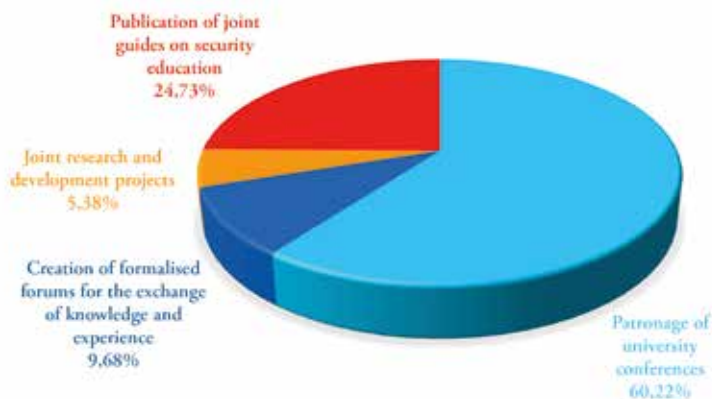


Figure 11f. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 4 (93 respondents, no answer from 1 respondent).

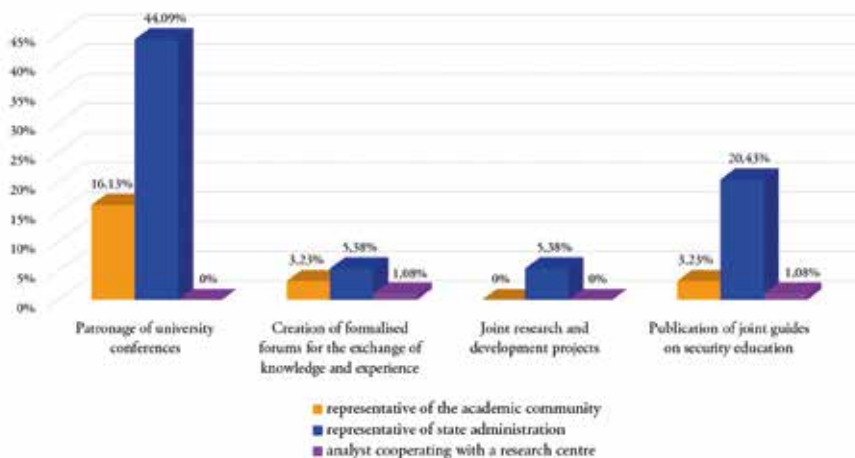


Figure 11g. Share of individual initiatives building anti-terrorist cooperation between academia and government institutions and services in the group of initiatives marked with number 4 – distribution of answers according to the community represented by the respondent.